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ELEONORA.

BY M. GOETHE,

AUTHOR OF THE

SORROWS OF WERTER.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A

POETIC EPISTLE

FROM

WERTER TO CHARLOTTE.

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E L E O N O R A.

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L E T T E R I.

May the 19th, 1770.

IT is then true, Maria!—My sensations corresponding too well with your description, to leave room for even a doubt—fool that I was not to perceive this before—to perceive it when attention, precision, and care, might have availed me something—precision and care;—they are incompatible with the movements of my heart—they are useless against the sentiments—the expressions of Werter.—When Werter speaks—when he throws his arm over the chair

in which he has placed Julia—when his eyes are fixed on hers, and he is explaining to her the excess of his feelings, and describing the warmth with which he enters into every thing that concerns her,—I listen to him and I lose myself—I forget all but Werter.—It is him only who engrosses every idea.—I am at a distance from them—they do not see me.—I weep, I clasp my hands together, and breathe a fervent prayer for his happiness. I rise—walk about the room: he is not disturbed by my moving—some flowers are on the table, he selects his favourites and offers them to my sister—she places them in her bosom, insensibly I find myself at the table, I chuse the same sort of flowers he has given Julia—I carefully arrange the lily of the valley on the left side of the rosebud, exactly as he had done, and I fix them next my heart—I take up a book, and whilst he does not suppose at all about me, I am attentively watching him. If by accident in the course of the day he addresses a few words to me, I assume an air of indifference, and veil what I would say to him, with the coldest, the most insipid language I can find, that he may not suspect me—How unnecessary that—He who thinks but of Julia, that he should even know I answer him.—Counsel me, Maria, tell me a thousand times how much I am in the wrong—persuade me to quit this scene, this enchanting scene which contributes hourly to my wretch-

edness—Who can withstand your eloquence ?
Ah ? those only who have a Werter to poise
against it.



LETTER II.

May the 25th.

“**I**F she loves him”—how is it possible that she should resist it ?—But do you wish me to answer from my own observations—if so—she does not.—She listens to him with complacency—she combats his arguments with strength of reason, even with philosophy, and when he gives up the point to her, instead of resigning the victory, of disclaiming any superiority over him, she smiles, and tells him he must moderate his ardour, that his passions are too strong—that with his sentiments he never can be happy.—How can she tell him that ?——If I were *sure* of it he should not know it.

He will propose a thousand plans to her——she will take them up categorically and refute them one by one, passing them over as you

would beads that you thread upon a string—— will prove to him how fallacious his schemes are ---schemes which were they proposed to me. . . . The other day whilst he was reading the most descriptive scene imaginable, and which he was embellishing by now and then adding his opinion on the subject; she recollected that she had not sent some broth to a poor woman in the neighbourhood which she had promised, and flew out of the room that she might get it in time for her dinner.——This was right—— it was praise-worthy——but was it *love*?—— The moment the door closed after her, Werter threw himself on the Sopha——reclined his head——shut his eyes——and hung his arm over the side, with his thumb on the book, that he might not, by losing the page, make her wait for the story on her return.——I moved to the chair he had quitted, leaned my elbows on the table, and covered my face with my hands, and the tears which I could not restrain passed plentifully thro' my fingers——I cannot express the sensations I felt whilst we were so situated.——What extreme indifference!——he hates me, said I to myself, and I am miserable—he will not even speak when Julia is absent. But how dare I complain——is he not the lover of Julia, and can I be wretched whilst he is happy.——I was awakened from my revery by the sound of——“Eleonora!”——pronounced in such a tone of voice that Werter

only could exprefs —— I raifed my head and beheld him in the attitude of enquiry —— “ You are not well,” faid he, “ or you are not happy, and why fhould you conceal your griefs from me, who would die to ferve my Julia’s fifter.” —— You know not the tones of Werter’s voice —— but you may form an idea of them, for they are in perfect unifon with every heart of fenfibility, and the impreffion they make can never be forgotten. —— I recover myfelf fufficiently to thank him for his attention, and affure him that I could not know a sorrow whilft he and Julia were happy —— that the book he had chofen was not calculated to infpire mirth, and he could not wonder at my being affected at the relation of a diftrefs fo well defcribed and fo pathetically delivered. —— He feemed fcarcely to believe my excufe —— but rofe —— “ Where is our dear Julia,” faid he, “ you wifh to hear the conclufion, Ellen, and I muft not finish it till Julia returns.” —— At the moment the amiable girl entered —— “ My fifter in tears ! but I know the caufe —— her gentle heart could not be unmoved at fuch a fcene, and I was obliged to fly for it.” —— He finifhed his ftory, and fince that he has feveral times fpoken to me. —— I began this with an intent to anfwer your queftion. —— Maria, if I have not made you underftand that Julia is not in love with Werter —— I fear you will determine Eleonora is.

L E T T E R III.

May the 30th.

STILL this Werter!——but how should it be otherwise? Accustomed from my infancy to see him continually——to listen to, and admire him——he is now become my darling theme——Ah! Maria, if you knew him——if you could but be a witness to the warmth, the energy he gives even to trifles. How interesting does he not make them appear——my God! that my heart should be so capable of understanding him.——A thousand times do I wish myself insensible.——Annihilation would be preferable to what I now suffer.——It is not my fault that I adore him—no—I am convinced it is involuntary. How many times have I wished that I did not exist——how ardently——how fervently have I prayed for death.——If Werter loved me——if I could make him happy. Maria, what an idea! I dare not indulge it.——Alas! I know no happiness——deserted and forlorn I wander round these delightful gardens——I seek the most solitary paths, and there I watch the silver moon gliding thro' the fine trees which spread their arms to form

a shade-----And I lament that beautiful as these scenes are----- they have no joys for me.

L E T T E R IV.

June the 11th.

JULIA is not well, and I scarcely ever leave her chamber.—Is it not strange, my Maria, that loving Werter as I do, my affection for Julia is not diminished?—How is it possible that I can feel so many tender sensations for my rival—for my rival?—It is not so—Julia would not, if she knew it, contribute to my wretchedness. And if Werter was not attached to Julia, perhaps he would not observe me. But the dear girl has been ill these ten days past—she alters visibly, and I would sacrifice my life to save hers.—When Werter enters her room, I throw myself upon the chair by her bedside, and I hide my face. I will not even listen to the sounds of his voice.—If you could see him, Maria!—At times he is almost petrified—and again he is wild with despair—He flies to me for comfort—to me—who can only weep and join

my prayers to his.—Oh thou Almighty Being, who knowest our hearts, and who see'st with what purity, with what sincerity I make my vows, restore her to our supplications—destroy not at once thy servants, but pity and preserve them.

LETTER V.

June the 14th.

WERTER is sitting by me, Julia is better, and it has made Werter quite another Being. He hears what is said to him—he even makes a rational answer, and he passes whole hours by my side to tell me how happy he is. Is it possible not to share his transports? And yet, Maria, I feel that I am become like a wretched man who is doomed to carry a heavy burthen to a certain distance. Wearied and disconsolate he treads the path that is to bring him to his destination.—All around him are Beings who are dancing over the green, and amusing themselves by gathering flowers. They address themselves to him—

they try to induce him to join in their gaiety—
 He looks at them and sighs——“ Ah, if I
 make one of their party, will it not prolong
 my misery ?—this load must be sustained—
 the weight of it cannot be cut off till I cease to
 exist :—And is it for me to dance and sing ?—
 Happy Beings, continue your sports—and let
 me pursue my way. Rather, if it be possible,
 add to my burthen that I may sink beneath
 its force and be the sooner crushed.”

LETTER VI.

June the 22d.

JULIA—is dead!—my God! what sensations does that create—Maria, I have lost every thing that is dear to me—and yet Werter lives—I thought that in Werter's indifference, I had suffered every evil of this world.—Alas! how deep, how poignant is my woe! I had told you she was recovering, and for a few days she mended fast—that idea adds now to my misery. Whilst we were pluming ourselves on her returning health—even whilst we were rejoicing around her—she died. She felt herself indisposed in the morning, and had removed from the sofa to her bed, imagining she should rest. But she did not close her eyes—and desired I would read to her. I observed her restless and uneasy, and persuaded her to let me send for Goirée, who attended her. He came—and fancied he should instantly relieve her. She swallowed his prescription, and, to make us happy, called herself better. At length she asked for Werter—he arrived, and gently putting aside the curtain, he sat down by her.—“My friend,” she said, “I have sent for you—you have

“ been my constant attendant during my ill-
 “ nefs—desert me not now—now that I shall
 “ so shortly leave you.”—“ Desert you!—
 “ leave me!—what is it you say, my Julia?”
 —“ Yes, Werter, I am going to leave you.
 “ I feel that the end of my existence is ap-
 “ proaching.—Do not start,—I am calm;—I
 “ am resigned. In Heaven, my friend, we
 “ shall meet, and we shall there enjoy that
 “ felicity so superior to what this world could
 “ have afforded us. In me you will lose a
 “ friend, who loved you tenderly, and who
 “ I know is very dear to you:—but you have
 “ fortitude, Werter;—you have every quality
 “ that can exalt the soul. Exert them then
 “ — exert them in compassion to yourself, and
 “ in pity to my poor sorrowing Eleonora; pro-
 “ tect....” But spare me, Maria—I cannot
 continue a scene which almost burst my heart:
 —My God!—the sister of my soul!—ex-
 pired—the friend of my heart! the tender,
 the indulgent monitress!—Do not attempt to
 comfort me—it is impossible—every thing is
 dark before me. I shut myself up—I will not
 see any one—and I indulge in all the bitter-
 ness of grief.

L E T T E R VII.

July the 15th.

WHAT an evening have I passed!—Werter has been here. He would see me—in an instant he threw open the door, and he was at my feet. Together we wept over our common misfortune—together we lamented our irreparable loss.—My dear friend, I felt, even at that moment—when every passion was blended—when they were all as it were called forth at once—I felt that nothing could restore me to my former tranquility.—I could not disguise my grief—much as it distressed Werter—I indulged it to the full. Julia loved me, she was interested for me, she was my guide; my faithful, my indulgent friend. Who can restore to me the happy hours we have spent when her elegant and judicious observations have enlarged my mind, and formed my manners—when she taught me to distinguish between the real and the apparent good!

How vain are my lamentations—my regret how lasting! I am overcome by this melancholy event. And if at any time I collect my

scattered senses, they serve only to convince me the more of the insufficiency of human happiness. Is there nothing for me but sorrow and distress? Ah! then; when I fancied my misery at its height—even then, it was augmented. Is not this a just punishment? Maria, I was wrapt up in one idea, it had taken possession of me, I was wholly engrossed by it—and now I find that my heart is large enough to admit a double weight of woe—when will it be at peace?

L E T T E R VIII.

July the 20th.

THIS day—for the first time since I lost my Julia—I ventured out to walk. How has every tree, every flower recalled her to my memory—I have traced her along every path—and her favorite seat—it was some time before I could command myself to turn into the walk in which it stands. The moment I reached it, I threw myself on my knees, and leaning my hand on the bench, gave a free vent to my tears. The jasmine that surrounds it is—from want of attention lately—grown luxuriant: with what emotions did I gather some of the blossoms. They were very dear to her. Werter had planted the tree, and Julia never failed to visit it every evening.

How many happy hours have we passed in this bower—hours never to be recalled—with what winged speed ye flew!—and now every leaf spoke to my heart—The disposition of the boughs, which hung neglected, or only caught up here and there by the tendrils of a vine which had made its way through the lattice—had something so mournful, so patheti-

cally touching in their appearance, that I could not withstand the sensations they raised in me. —I was overpowered by the weight of my affliction—why is it that sorrow takes such strong hold upon me? Is calamity to be my guide through life?—I am not naturally of a melancholy turn; there was a time when cheerfulness danced before me—Hope was on my right hand and Contentment on my left. I gave myself up to their protection—we rushed giddily after our conductress.—Though what flowery paths she led us! whatever we saw was worthy of our attention, every trifle amused us. At the altar of Religion we bowed our heads, our hearts hailed her as our superior patroness—we offered gratefully our vows at her shrine. She received our sacrifices, and smiled on us with that benignity which can exalt the human heart to such a pitch of sublimity. My friend, we met with Love;—he seduced Cheerfulness from us, and he supplied her place;—at first we scarcely perceived the change; but we had not wandered long, when the boy grew captious.—Hope trembled and turned pale. She saw, and warned me of my danger: Love struck at her, and she fled. Contentment vanished. I would have followed, but with artful, with flowery bands he detained me. How soft, how gentle, he was then to me;—but soon,

what a tyrant did he become! What would I not have given to have broken my fetters! —yet now—that Despair has driven him from my heart—am I more at ease?—I am convinced we know not what is best for us, and our part is only to submit with resignation to the events which the Most High shall judge we are capable of supporting.

L E T T E R IX.

July the 29th.

I OFTEN wonder how it is, that I support this miserable existence.—Agitated—tormented—wearied of every thing—I have not a ray of comfort—not a spark to cheer me on my way. I sicken at society : here are several very worthy people who visit me—as they say—to prevent my being melancholy. How little they know of me !—they sit whole hours by my side, and form a conversation of their own on a thousand indifferent subjects, not one of which, perhaps, I hear. A yes, or no—at random—is all I am able to offer them : and when, as it frequently happens, I place them exactly where they should not be, they look wisely at each other, and, with a shake of the head, exclaim, “ that I think too much.”—Werter came in last night whilst I was surrounded with a set of these insensibles. His eyes were swollen, and his countenance pale and languid—what expression was there in his look—he took my hand but did not speak.—I honoured him for it—methought I would not have had him utter a syllable whilst they staid. He walked to the window—drew out his handkerchief, and left the room. Maria,

you will understand this—as for me, I could not support it, my tears flowed apace, and my good-natured companions, who found their presence could be of no use—took their leave. Werter returned—he did not attempt to restrain my sorrow by any of those hacknied proverbs which every body repeats at will, but he soothed me with those elegant expressions of tenderness so peculiar to himself. It would not do, Maria.—I feel that I shall never conquer the woe that oppresses me. It is now a rapid torrent of affliction which overwhelms me, it is a small, still stream of sorrow, which silently, and without alarm, wears its own channel and deepens as it flows. Not even Werter can charm—I listened to him, and my heart gratefully acknowledged his attentions—he seemed to forget his own griefs, that he might lessen mine. The two hours he spent with me, moved on; they did not fly as they were wont to do in happier times, when I never heard his footstep without emotion, nor parted from him without regret.—And is it possible we should so soon change?—Change!——I do not like that word—it cannot be—my heart—my ideas—my sentiments with regard to Werter changed?—My dear friend, help me to unravel this. Were my affections so lightly placed?—Is Werter an object to inspire a transient passion?—I bewilder myself in endeavouring to account for what

I now feel. Can it be that Werter should ever be indifferent to me?

L E T T E R X.

August the 6th.

WHAT is it you tell me?—That I love Werter; that I adore him: but that it is the common caprice of human nature to prize a blessing less when attainable, than when the apparent impossibility puts it out of our reach.—Maria, I should hate myself if it were true.—But you say, “Ellen, you are not changed, it is perhaps that the greater evil swallows up the less—in the present violence of your affliction, for the loss of Julia, you think not of the passion, which before consumed you, for Werter——have patience, and a little time will prove this to you.”—My dear friend, is it for me then to wait for the return of what has given me so much uneasiness? rather let me embrace the present trouble—I know the extent of that—but let me confess to you, the calm I now feel with regard to Werter—is not a happy one—

I am continually restless, anxious : without wishing to see him, I am always recollecting something I should have said to him when I saw him last, but when he comes in I am composed, I observe every thing he says, and am sorry when the time arrives that we are to part.— But these are not the sensations I before experienced :—The other evening, when he rose, I looked at my watch, and threw my eyes on a violet in my work which was not above half finished—“ I thank you, my dear Eleonora,” said he, “ you permit me to stay till your flower is done.” “ What pity,” I returned, “ that there is not a bunch of flowers !” Werter pressed my hand—and instantly rushed out of the room. I looked after him, but he was gone : and he returned no more that night.—Why was this ?—Maria, I sometimes think—but no :—perhaps I reminded him of Julia.

This morning, when he looked in, the work was still unfinished.—He stooped down—looked tenderly on the flower, and kissed it. “ Dear violet,” I whispered, “ the choicest shades shall be mingled in your blossom, and your leaves shall never fade—I will finish you with the nicest care, and from this instant your lovely originals shall adorn my bosom.”—From what trifles, my Maria, do we compose our happiest moments ! Never, never, can I forget the expression of Werter’s countenance

—surely he did not hear me—and yet, if he had ; Heaven knows how innocently I meant it. And he received it so. There was so much goodness, such gentle compassion in his fine eyes as he bent them on me—they seemed to say, “ Ellen, you are a good girl, and I love you for the gentleness I find in you.”—He proposed our walking—why did I carefully avoid the garden ? Maria, I am ashamed to say why—and to punish myself for the idea, on my return I led him to the seat I so lately described to you.—We entered the arbour together—every tender remembrance of my Julia was recalled—they rushed with all their force at once upon me : and again I paid a tribute of tears to her memory.—Werter turned his eyes to Heaven, he raised his hands, and uttered a fervent ejaculation.—It was at once a tender recollection of Julia, and a prayer of preservation for me. Judge of my feelings—I could not speak—a deep sigh burst from my heart—for some minutes we continued silent, but it was a silence so eloquent—on the part of Werter it spoke more than the most elaborate speech could have expressed.—How can I be so foolish ?—let me not deceive myself—tell me that this tenderness so elegant—so moving, is natural to him.—That it is not to me it is directed ; or rather—if it is to me—it is only from motives of the purest friendship—of the softest compassion. He sees my

sufferings, and by a manner at once interesting and engaging, he tries to alleviate my sorrows. But he knows not—I am sure he does not suspect, how much I feel for him—and what an addition to my woe will it be, if the delusive veil, which is now spread around me, is to be torn away, and I be left—forlorn—disappointed—and deceived !

L E T T E R. XI.

August the 24th.

I T cannot be!—I am not deceived—too often have I watched Werter and Julia, to be now a stranger to his meaning. Whole days does he pass near me—he reads the most affecting passages—he calls forth every tender sensation—and whilst my heart is swelling in my bosom, he stops—gazes attentively at me—presses my hand to his lips—then breathes out my name in a tone that is not to be mistaken—and yet, Maria, this does not make me happy. What situations—what tender remembrances does it not recall—in every word he utters I trace his accents to Julia—to Julia, my beloved sister—so lately lost, and so sincerely lamented. —Ah Werter! Is it then possible that your attentions are so soon transferred—the object of your warmest affections is no more—but can you change them?—Can Eleonora so soon supply the place of Julia?—And is she not as deeply engraven on your heart as when—in other times—she lived and moved, and shared your mirth or sorrows?—No—he cannot be so quickly altered—Walter cannot have already forgotten the sentiments she im-

parted to him—the truths—the wisdom—the eloquence—that flowed from her tongue—the charms of her person, and the virtues of her mind—and, remembering them, can he ever love another?—How easily are we led away by happy prospects of our own creating!—We follow the enchanting vision till—tired and exhausted—too late we find the delusion: And it is not till we are on all sides surrounded by rocks and precipices that we discover our error. I will go then, my friend—I will fly this spot, for many reasons dear to me, but where I have been so vast a sufferer. Every path I tread here is fascinating. Like the wiles of the magicians, they enslave my soul, and though my reason would fain persuade me of my danger, yet is the enchantment so strong, that nothing but the mirror of Truth, held up by the hands of Virtue, can free me from their power—Oh! Nature, how powerful are thy dictates! How cruel, how unjust are the laws of Custom!—Tyrannic are her edicts, and they must be obeyed.—I bow then before them—I will not see Werter—to-morrow, before he comes, I shall be far from hence; I will go to where my aunt has often entreated me to come.—There, in the midst of dissipation and amusement, may I forget what now lies so near my heart—it is a recipe I have often heard of but never tried.—Absence—the hurry of a town-life, and continual dissipation.—I fear,

I fear Maria they will not do—if I know myself—I think they will not—yet I will pursue my plan. What would you say to a child who was ill—who was dying with a disease that was momentarily preying upon it, and sapping the foundation of its existence, and yet obstinately persisted in refusing every succour, every relief that was offered.—Hitherto I have been that child!—But I will exert myself!—Yes, by an effort of my own I will voluntarily quit this scene:—to-morrow I will go. But how shall I disguise my intentions?—When Werter comes this evening, what shall I say to him—will it not be unkind, ungenerous, to conceal them from him:—from him, who so tenderly, so affectionately supported my drooping spirits, and administered the balm of heavenly pity to my aching heart?——Yet is he not himself the origin of all my woes? And how can a remedy be effectual that does not begin by removing the cause of the disease?—It is then determined.—*I will go.*

L E T T E R XII.

September the 8th.

WHAT a change have I experienced! A change of situation—of life—of manners—of every thing but ideas: and those, Maria, are what I most wish changed. Well, let us proceed—already I have been here a fortnight, and in all that time have I not found one object to interest—to charm me. The people who incessantly visit here, are a happy set of unthinking beings, who merrily speed away the present hour, and laugh (say they) that they may not do worse.—Maria, there is a world of intelligence in that—though, to do them justice, their idea went no farther, I am certain, than the mere filling up the sentence, and laughing at the end of it, to convince you of what they meant. But I will observe it—it shall be a lesson for me, and I will laugh too:—nor can I in this place be at a loss for subjects—my Aunt, who is an amiable, excellent woman, is—by her station here—so situated that her doors are ever open to strangers, and her table is frequented by persons of the first fashion—in vain I seek amongst them for a Werter—it is not in crowded cities, or

at the mansions of the great, that noble and generous minds display themselves. How seldom here does the eye explain what is passing in the breast, nor dares the tongue express the opinion the mind forms of the surrounding multitude.—Truly may they call this a life of dissipation—from morn to night a continual round of engagements. The same people are hourly employed in varying their amusements, which they contrive to do by meeting alternately at their own houses, or the places of public entertainment—How new this to you—to me it was so for the first week, but now I am more reconciled to their customs, and can hear with tolerable patience the same routine of questions repeated to every fresh face that makes its appearance:—nay, I have three times answered the same enquiries to the same person. Here is a good little woman who makes it her business to arrange on the Monday morning all her conversation for the ensuing week—for the day I should have said, since the seven are determined by the first—for every hour fixes such a subject—and I have known her to break out in a pious ejaculation, whilst I was answering her last question, about a pointed ruffle—only because, in the intermediate time, the clock had struck one. This woman gives me very little trouble—by Wednesday I am prepared for her—I fall in with her way, and she finds me one of her easiest

jargonists. Not so the fat Dutchess of B——; willing to convince me of her understanding—she quotes for ever from the most abstruse books extant—and no longer ago than yesterday, she was giving me a long lecture on philosophy, when, unfortunately for her, at the instant the young Count of Holstein passed by, and she gave him such a glance as immediately convinced me it was not stoicism she studied.—Madame de V—— is beautiful as an angel, but she has so steady a determination not to discompose her features by a single turn of expression, that it is some time before you can discover whether it is a wooden, or a living doll, you speak to—her mechanical curtseys would confirm you in the first suspicion; but I watched her yesterday for ten minutes, and was happily at last assured of her existence by a faint scream—because Louisa's tame canary bird flew across the room, which so alarmed her that she presently fainted—though Miss de L——, who sat next to me, insisted it was only to display her fine form—as reclined in the arms of the Chevalier F——, who was luckily near enough to support her.—As for the men, Maria, they have but one language—that of love—Of love!—how dare they profane the sacred name! Yet you will see them addressing every woman in turn, and offering each the same homage. They have indeed the art to vary their style, and dress it

up either in studied simplicity—or pompous declamation—as their penetration leads them to discover the taste of the lady they apply it to.—The Count of Holstein is at present my most formidable hero at this amusement. He is ever at my side—he “lives but for me”—he “adores me,” and a thousand times a day he wishes I would command him to signalize himself in any—almost incredible exploit, that he may have an opportunity of convincing me how much he is devoted to my service.—“I am sorry, my Lord, you are so mistaken in me—I would not even have my name known, and to assure you of the sincerity of what I say, the only favour I beg of you—is to cease those unmerited compliments you lavish on me—I am not ambitious of services which—as they would be performed with so much éclat—would expose me to the envy and malevolence of every female. Consider, my Lord, in what you would involve me, and spare an ignorant, who really has not genius enough to admire your poetic flights of fancy”—“My charming Eleonora, with what elegant refinement you convince me of the impropriety of my address—you delight not in tumults—the bustle of active life is more than your delicate frame could support. But suffer me to admire your taste, and to assure you, that the charms of retirement have ever been my ruling passion, but unfortunately—my rank in life—

and my entrance into the army has thrown me into a situation and a turn of conversation that I cannot easily disengage myself from. Let me, I entreat you, study your taste—your style—your manners—and happy shall I be if a course of the most respectful attentions may in time induce you to listen to what is nearest my heart.”—“A dissertation on the beauties of an embroidered waistcoat. I hope, my Lord, you will find me there, not so great a novice as I am on the subject of love—a rustic, you know, may be allowed to understand the amusement of a retired life.”—“Unkind Eleonora—if you knew” “No more, my Lord—you will exhaust your subject. I beg of you to remember there are other women in the room—who already condemn me for having engrossed so much of your attention.—Adieu.”

What think you, Maria, of a modern conversation? Ah! how unlike but I will not allow myself a single recollection. No—whilst I stay here I will enter—and that furiously—into every thing the place affords. I will be as giddy as the giddiest, and rattle with the most lively—there shall be nothing wanting to complete my cure—condemn me not if I do not succeed, since every effort shall be tried. But is this likely to advance it? The contrast is too striking—Do you know I am almost

pleased that in this croud I have found any who resemble Werter. It is an honour to him to stand alone—and alone in the universe he is. How superior is his understanding—how exalted his turn of thought—his sentiments how noble, and what force of expression! A single sentence of his would suffice for the subject of a whole day here. His genius soars above the trifles that occupy other mens most serious attention—it is the mind he prizes—it is to that he addresses himself, and what satisfaction beams in his eyes when he finds himself understood! I have seen him transported with enthusiastic rapture when he has been explaining the attributes of the Deity—he was more than mortal—the fire of his imagination communicated itself to my heart, and I listened with the devotion of an adoring spirit—I have seen Pleasure and Contentment play around him whilst he was describing the touching—the simple—duties of a life of innocence and peace.—When he has pointed out the cottager, surrounded by his family, enjoying with gratitude the blessings of a bounteous God—or when he has dwelt on the happy scenes that continually arise in a well regulated family—who are every thing to each other, and who live together loving and beloved.—And, my friend, is Werter a character to be forgotten?

L E T T E R XIII.

September the 13th.

WE were yesterday at a very brilliant and crowded assembly at the Princess of H——'s. It was an entertainment given in honour of her birth-day, and every art, every luxury was introduced that could render it delightful. After a most sumptuous dinner——and coffee had been presented to every guest——we retired to the saloon, the doors of which were thrown open upon a lawn surrounded with tents, apparently supported by festoons of flowers, which extended from one to the other all round them——in each there was a little table spread with fruit and confectionary of different sorts. At both ends of the lawn were bands of music——the one played the English country dances——the other cotillons and allemandes——In an instant every body was in motion—the Count of Holstein seized my hand, and conducted me to the set. The gaiety of the scene and the lively tones of the music had inspired me—we went down the dance with spirit and ease. At the end of it we were complimented by the Princess herself, who assured us we “did honor to her assembly,” and the same instant pre-

sented a young relation of hers——the Duke de
 G——, who was, she said, ambitious of lead-
 ing off an allemande with me——The Count
 looked at him with *hauteur*——bit his lips, and
 with a malicious smile——bowed his resigna-
 tion. The Duke was a stranger——or rather
 he was a native of the place, but a long absence
 had made him new amongst them——he had
 been thro' most of the European Courts, and
 had travelled in a style of splendor, which had
 ensured him every where a good reception, and
 he was returned with that air of self-conse-
 quence which generally imposes. His bow——
 was foreign——the air with which he led me
 up the lawn—even his step had something in it
 unlike any of the others. His manner was com-
 manding, and he had about him all that im-
 portance, which seems so satisfied with itself,
 and so well knows to maintain its own dignity.
 In short, he was the wonder of the men, and
 the admiration of the women. We began our
 dance—he had imported new changes—different
 turns——and many graces, which I had never
 before seen in an allemande. He whispered
 them whilst we were waiting for a place,
 and fortunately I succeeded so well in the exe-
 cution, that he was in raptures. The eyes of
 the whole company were upon us—I trembled
 at being so much noticed—I had nearly stopped,
 “Take courage,” said he, “you dance divinely
 —you move a goddess—how fortunate am I!”

—We finished, and were universally applauded, What an inundation of compliments did I not receive from him, his *fiercé* vanished, and he was my slave. The Count returned—he congratulated me in the strongest terms upon the entertainment I had given the company—the Duke looked for his share of the applause, but he looked in vain—Holstein would not even see that he was by my side. But amply was he recompensed by the continued repetition of——How he dances! did you ever see any thing so graceful? It is Apollo himself!—this was echoed from all quarters.

They each redoubled their assiduities—they had no eyes, no ears, but for me. Their compliments were well turned, but they were to me insipid—fatiguing—tiresome. I was entreated to dance again, but I declined it, “it was,” I said, “more than I could support—the fatigue would be too great for me.” They each assented to my excuse, and strove to entertain me—the Count by satirizing every woman present, and the Duke by a finished description of the British Court. I listened to him with pleasure, for he led me through quite a new scene. He dwelt with rapture on the virtues of the English queen—the majesty, yet the mildness, with which she supported her dignity—her excessive humanity—the generous eagerness with which she entered into and relieved the distresses

of her subjects—amiable in herself, she forms the happiness of those about her. What a character this for a sovereign!—He was charmed with the beauty and manners of the English women—he described them accurately, and to do him justice, if they are as lovely as he represents them to be, they deserve all that can be said in their favour.—But what luxuries have they not introduced among them—he tells me in their great cities Nature is entirely excluded, and Art supplies her place—that they have no distinction of Summer and Winter, for in July their desserts are supplied with ices of the flavour of various fruits, and in December they wear a profusion of flowers fresh from their beds—whilst an artificial heat is introduced beneath the floors to prevent those guests suffering from the cold whom chance has placed at a distance from the stove.—He spoke of some new and surprising inventions lately crept in amongst them, which he acknowledged tended to soften and refine, and would, he imagined in time subdue the Britons to an equality with their neighbours in France. He then talked of France. In short, the poor Count was in despair, he could not introduce a sentence. At length supper was announced. At the same moment they each presented a hand, and I, undetermined which to give mine to, made an effort to move, which the Duke perceiving eagerly caught my hand, and conducted me to the

supper-room—The Count followed—he looked angrily at me, and with contempt at G———passing by me——“Is this well done, Eleonora?—is it generous?—but I shall find a time.” and without waiting a reply he walked hastily on. His glance at the Duke, and his “I shall find a time,” alarmed me.—What can he mean, thought I, a time to revenge himself on me—ah! how insignificant his threat—or on G———, but we shall see. When we entered the room the tables were nearly filled, and the Count was seated by the Dutcheſs of B———, the Philoſopher.—Maria—if this was his revenge I was ſatisfied. Poor Count, what a converſation have you to ſupport!—and the idea turned my features to a ſmile. He obſerved it, and riſing, offered me his ſeat. The Duke would have led me further—but Holſtein was inſiſting, I declining, and the Dutcheſs on the other hand with her arm through his, requeſting he would not be ſo rude to leave her, when ſhe had congee’d the Count of O——— and the Captain of the Guard to make room for him. The confuſion our groupe occaſioned was exceſſive. The men flew to place me, and the women were waiting in ſilent wonder to ſee how the affair would terminate, when the Princeſs perceiving the debate, ſent a ſervant to her nephew with orders to conduct me round on her ſide, where ſhe had retained ſeats for us both. The figure of the

Count was scarcely human, nor can I describe his countenance——his mouth seemed actuated by a something, between a smile of pretended satisfaction, and a grin of defiance——the colour rushed into his cheeks, and he voluntarily stepped one foot over the bench---which had nearly overset the fat Dutchess, who had not yet relinquished her hold.—I left them so situated, and proceeded to the Princess's table, at which, as a stranger, I had the honour of sitting. Ah! these pompous meetings:——of how little consequence was it to me where I sat!——When supper was ended we returned to the saloon, which was superbly illuminated, and the music formed a semi-circle at each end, that we might continue our dancing without the inconvenience of the damps or night air. The Count came up, he again offered his hand for an English country dance. “I cannot, Eleonora,” said he, “attempt an allemande with you——I should put you quite out, and believe me the precision with which your traveller attended to every step, was no proof of his attachment.”——“Of his attachment, my Lord, you forget we are acquaintance of an evening only.”——“That is to say, madam, a few evenings more may complete the enchantment you have already begun.”——“How strangely you interpret, my Lord, and to save you a reprimand which you would not perhaps like, I will join the set, but remember it is for this dance only——I am not accustomed to

such kind of conduct."—"Oh! forgive, forgive," cried he, "I never will offend you more. If you knew what I suffer when"

"It is time we began, my Lord."—The dance was over: and I went down a second and a third time with the Duke. It was now one o'clock, and we were summoned to an elegant refreshment of tea, coffee, orgeat, &c. &c.—Miss de L———, who was of our party, sat near me, and a young Counsellor, whom I had not before observed, was standing behind her chair talking to her. In the course of conversation he spoke to me—the tone of his voice struck me—it raised in my heart an emotion I could not conquer—I longed anxiously to listen to his discourse, at the same time I flattered myself his sentiments would correspond with the ideas I had formed of him.—I was not disappointed.—A chair being vacant near me, he took it, and—shall I tell you? he recommended himself to me by his similitude to Werter.—Dancing was again proposed—he regretted that he was engaged, but he trusted he should not find his partner.—She appeared, and they joined the set. I declined any more dancing, and my Aunt talked of our going—I readily consented, and about two we reached our own house.—Maria, I have read over this letter—and what is it I have been relating! how trifling! how ridiculous does it appear—but it is a task I have imposed on myself, and I

will pursue it, if it is only to banish from my thoughts more dear, more interesting recollections !

L E T T E R XIV.

September the 17th.

TH E Princess's entertainment has been succeeded by one given by Lady T——, not so fine indeed, but to me how much more interesting, and why was it so ?—— Ah ! Maria, how can we account for our feelings ; they are not, indeed, they are not voluntary, or I never should, when surrounded with all the Noblesse, many of them anxiously soliciting the honour of my hand for the evening, have preferred this Counsellor, who, in his Werter-like manner, simply requested the favour of me. I have heard that vanity is the ruling passion of every woman's heart : and however, for a moment it may yield to inclination, yet whenever an opportunity offers, it resumes its place, and haughtily sacrifices every trace of love to its superior dictates :——It is not so, my friend,

for I was courted by the Baron M———; the Prince himself offered me his hand; his nephew again—— and the Count, you may be sure, did not forget me——yet I danced with Ponthin—I sacrificed them all at the shrine of Werter. What was the envy of the women to me in comparison to the tender remembrances which Ponthin recalled. Situated as I am, this is not a thing to boast of——I acknowledge it, Maria, but for this one evening, said I to myself, only this one evening, I will indulge myself—every hour since I have been here has been given up to others; for once surely then I may aim at happiness. How dangerous was this resolution——yet I persisted.——And this Ponthin, where has he been so long concealed? and from whence is he? so unlike every other being here: I had scarcely formed these enquiries in my own mind, when I learnt from him that he was from———, that he had been very severely indisposed of late. (Ah! my friend, perhaps some secret grief had preyed upon his heart) and was but just arrived, to try the efficacy of the baths near this place.——And may they restore thee, thought I to myself, and possibly to some sweet woman who loves, and is beloved by thee, who now laments thy absence, and prays, fervently prays for thy returning health. The idea softened me, and a tear started to my eye.——It had hardly time to appear, when a glance from the Count frightened it back again.——

He advanced—"My God," said he, "how charming you are to-night—what expression—what intelligence in your countenance!" Do you know I felt as if he knew the extent of my affection for Werter, and I seemed to shrink from him with disgust—"Why is it, Eleonora," he continued, "that you will not give me one dance this evening?" "Because I was before engaged," returned I, "and it is not, you know, customary to change partners." "And yet you changed when at the Princess's, you chagrined me so much." "It was not my fault, the Princess herself introduced a stranger to me, and it was not for me, at her house, to dispute the point with her." "You give excellent reasons for your conduct, madam, but at present, when M. de Ponthin permits me" "I beg pardon, my Lord, I do not indeed permit—I claim and support my right—it is the will of the lady only I will submit to."—"My will," said I, "is to keep the partner I first engaged myself to—consequently, my Lord, you are answered."—I was angry with him, Maria, for daring to suppose that Ponthin would resign me to him. Ah! I knew him too well: from the first moment he spoke to me, I formed my opinion, and what I have hitherto seen of him has confirmed my conjectures. I judge of him by Werter—by Werter! what a trial to bring him to! If he is equal to that he must be great indeed. But, Maria,

though I am pleased, delighted, with him as a substitute, yet I feel that he is not Werter. He has however his tone, his accent, his manner. His mind is highly cultivated, and his notions liberal; but he has not that force of expression, that strength of determination, by which Werter is so eminently distinguished.—He is more soft, more gentle—and yet how gentle have I seen Werter!—but enough.—We danced, but not violently—I was too much pleased with his conversation to let it be often interrupted. He talked, and I listened—how much pleasanter was the evening than that of the Princess's! What difference between the style of the Duke, and the observations of Ponthin! The scenes of grandeur he introduced, how tiresome, when compared to the sketches of my new friend! His manner was artless—but how expressive! what did it not convey to you, how minutely did he enter into your feelings—not a look, not a thought escaped him—I caught myself once looking attentively at him. He observed it, and seemed to wonder. “Pardon me,” said I, “you resemble so strongly in your ideas, in your manner, a very dear friend of mine, that I was trying to trace some similitude in features.” “And have you succeeded?” cried he with impatience—“I would willingly be like any friend you love.” “Ah! no,” I returned, “you have not the same turn of feature, but your senti-

ments, your opinions are so like, so very like, that I can almost fancy him present." "What pity," said he, with a sigh, "that I do not represent him entirely, you would then be so satisfied with me." "I am contented with you as you are," I rejoined, "we do not make ourselves." I instantly felt the rudeness of this remark, but Werter at that moment pressed so strongly on my mind—the glance of his eye—the expression of his look—I saw only him. "We do not indeed," said Ponthin, "or I would be the happy man you speak of." "Happy," I repeated, and I fancy with a particular emphasis, for he looked surprised.—"It is enough," said I, "here is the Count coming in search of me."—"And why the Count? has he any particular" "None, none—but the company are retiring to supper, let us follow."——We did so, and he was seated next me. The party was large, and they seemed determined to fall into duets: the lady near me and her partner, Ponthin and myself formed our *tête-à-têtes*, we did not interfere with each other; and the time how short it appeared! What amiable qualities does he possess! what an excellent heart he has, and how refined, how elevated is his understanding! A public education has given a freedom to his air, so elegant, and so distinguishable; it has also adorned his mind, and enlarged his ideas. He is indeed a valuable acquisition here. But he

has art, Maria ; he wants that noble frankness, that confidence which marks every thing that Werter says and does.—He affected to believe my heart engaged ; he wanted to induce me to confess——to confess to him ! and in order to persuade me, he pointed out a lady who had already made him her confidant. “ She did right,” said I, “ doubtless she had her reasons, but I, I have nothing to reveal.”—He several times repeated the enquiry. I assured him what I could say on affairs of the heart, would not be worth his attention, since it was so insipid it could not afford amusement to a mind like his. He smiled, and was obliged to give up the point. But he substituted a thousand agreeable subjects, and I found him an adept in the art of conversation. When the carriages were announced (for we did not dance after supper) he led me to mine, and expressed regret at parting. Yesterday he came to tea with us, and found only our own family. My Aunt is charmed with him, and Louisa owns, that “ although he has no title, he is pleasing,” yet she could not feel happy, that I rejected the Prince for a partner, and accepted him.—How little does she know of the human heart !

L E T T E R XV.

September the 25th.

THIS Ponthin is very amiable : the other evening he was giving us an account of his time as it passed in his own family :—his father, mother, and sister are yet living—how happy he is !—And he has a brother to whom he is united by the warmest ties of friendship, he is an officer in the ——— service. Noble, generous, and disinterested, he loves a very charming woman, whose father, hardened by the force of worldly views, denies the admission into his house——which his daughter has given him into her heart. She is resolutely determined to marry no other man, and he has vowed to live for her alone. The young woman has no fortune, but what must proceed from her relentless father, and this child of honour is endervouring to persuade her to divide his with him ;——but Ponthin fears he will not succeed. “ She loves,” said he, “ loves him tenderly, but her ideas are so exalted, and her mind so

pure, that she will not consent to become a burthen to the man whose affection for her outweighs with him every other consideration.—“How cruel,” exclaimed I, “that those few, those very few, who know the value, and feel the force of a true disinterested love should be restrained by the cold unfeeling hand of fortune—how many different sources of misery are there in this life! some are deterred by inability from exercising that fervour of generosity which glows in the heart, and which in such a case as this, would at once free this unfortunate woman from the unjust tyranny of an avaricious parent---would present her a rich gift to the man she loves, and make two worthy people happy.—Others there are, who blessed with all that fortune can bestow—marry—and too late find that they are betrayed, cheated, and deceived.—The man who before appeared so kind, so attentive, now openly avows his passion for another, and acknowledges that his only method of attaining the woman he loved, was ensuring the possession of a fortune like hers, and that he now defies every disappointment. The wifes in despair gives herself up to the most poignant grief, and a short time puts a period to her miserable existence. She dies of a broken heart!” “There cannot be such a monster as you describe,” hastily interrupted Ponthin——“such a wretch never existed.”——“Yes, my friend, the picture I

draw is a sad but faithful copy of an original, which lately came within my view.”——“ My God !” said Ponthin, “ and could she not be saved——could not the sweet attentions of a friend pour balm into her wounds——could not Eleonora preserve her ?”——“ Ah ! no——the dart was irrevocably thrown, she was pierced even before her wrongs were known, and I am persuaded that nothing but his open and repeated insults could have induced her to let even a friend share her sorrows——but they were too public to be long concealed——She died. And the being I speak of married the woman who had been a sharer in this vile plot, and who is now dividing the spoil.” “ May he be justly punished,” he cried, “ may he feel all the envenomed shafts of love burning in his heart for an object who despises him, and may he experience from the wretch, who now riots in the success of his machinations, the same cruelty he so vauntingly bestowed.”——“ And yet,” said I, “ these are not the only evils we complain of——There is, between these two extremes, a fatal one, which though apparently more moderate, is equally sure in its effect. It is not always equality of station that secures happiness.——A heart may be bestowed, when all the treasures of the East, all the virtues under Heaven, every grace, and every beauty united, cannot recall it. (Ponthin listened attentively) The object it is given to

knows not that he possesses it——and perhaps loves another. (Ponthin bent forward, looked earnestly in my face, caught my hand and clasped it in both his) When this happens what is to be done?——how can you extricate yourself from the deep pit into which you are fallen?——You have, perhaps, perceived, or fancied you perceived evident marks of attachment from the person to whom you have given this heart—you suffer time to add to——and various accomplishments to strengthen your attachment. And at length you are undeceived——accident, or more accurate observation discovers your error——(Ah! Eleonora, softly, said Ponthin) and too late you find in what a labyrinth you are involved. The heart, ever ready to deceive itself, is willing to make excuses, but the reason, the judgment——Ah! that cannot be deceived.”—Ponthin walked furiously about the room. He was agitated—almost convulsed. A tear rolled down my cheek—he stopped, perceived it, and stood for some time gazing at me—I covered my face with my handkerchief—the remembrance of Werter came like a thunderbolt across me—I wept—and sobbing left the room. But what avails this, my friend, it must, it must be conquered. This passion at present so tumultuous—will it ever be subdued?

L E T T E R XVI.

October the 1st.

THE Count of Holstein torments me—he is perpetually repeating the same thing—and I never see him but he teases me with entreaties to listen to his love. He has the assurance to tell me I am obstinate—that if I would suffer his assiduities, he thinks I might in time bear to hear him declare his affection. His vanity is insufferable—I!—I hear his professions without the greatest disgust—it can never be!—No; if ever I could listen to any but Werter, in the language of love, it must be Ponthin.—Ponthin, whose gentle elegance, whose enthusiastic ardor is so like my Werter's—*my* Werter! did I say—Maria, how we deceive ourselves!

LETTER XVII.

October the 9th.

I CANNOT stay in this place: It is now six weeks since I have been here, and in all that time not the least tidings, not a word have I heard of Werter. Do you not wonder how I have borne this? For the first time since he was dear——so dear to me; am I separated from him. And into what a scene am I thrown! whole days am I obliged to spend with those who are so tiresome——so disagreeable to me—and when at night I retire to rest, instead of sleep I pass my hours in tears.—In the morn I rise, and the same objects present themselves.—Again I go to my bed, and sorrow and melancholy prevails.—This will not do, my friend—I am impatient to hear some news of Werter. If I could only hear he was well, I think I should be contented.

L E T T E R XVIII.

October the 13th.

I AM still here; my Aunt, who carefully observes me—who watches every turn of my countenance, has at length perceived the fire which consumes me. She rallies—she consoles with—she counsels me—she uses every effort to induce me to tell her the cause of a secret grief, which she is sure oppresses me.—But never, never shall she tear the secret from my bosom.—What would it avail me if she knew it? She can neither alleviate, or mitigate my sufferings; and surely to expose our weaknesses without even a hope of consolation arising from it, is but giving others an advantage over us, which we can never recal, and which serves but to encrease our confusion.—I continually tell her she is mistaken—that the sadness she perceives is natural to me, and that the recent loss of Julia hangs heavy at my heart.—In this I do not deceive her; in my most retired moments, Julia has her full tribute of tears.—Ah! dear and amiable sister, wert thou but near me, I could—yes, I think I could conquer this grief; this passion would be softened by thy tender, thy affectionate remonstrances—I

would lay open my heart to thee, and thou would'st probe and heal its wounds. And yet—how unaccountable—how intricate are my feelings!—I am interrupted, they tell me I must dress for a ball—I am to wear a white lute-string embroidered with violets; and the flower that Werter kissed—I have had the gown made with that dear violet nearest my heart.

L E T T E R XIX.

October the 14th.

I DANCED last night with Ponthin—but I will not dance with him any more. My friend, his voice, his manner——how did they recal Werter to my own mind!—This young man is not happy, and a secret sympathy—a sympathy perhaps of misfortunes attaches me to him.—I feel for him all the tendernefs of a brother. He too loves, and loves hopelessly : I discovered it last night,—in every word, in every action I could fee it. He has not that carelefs, unconcerned air which you observe in thofe infipid mortals, whose affections (if they have any) have never been called forth, or at leaft extended no farther than themselves.—He loves, and I believe his heart is at a diftance, nevertheless he profeffes a friendship, a fincere friendship for me ; and he told me, when I led (without intending it) to the fubject, that fome day he would unravel to me the fecret motions of his heart, but that at prefent he was not at liberty to reveal what gave him fo much difquiet.

Ah ! Maria, is not the weight of my own sorrows fufficient without adding to them the diftreffes of a worthy man, for whose misfor-

tunes I feel I should be interested. If he wants fortune to complete his happiness, I pity him; but if his love is not returned——poor Ponthin, what must he not suffer! However, that is scarcely possible, no one can see him with indifference, and I do not believe there is a heart pre-engaged that could withstand the sense, the expression, the elegance of Ponthin.——

But this ball. It was like all the others, crowded, gay, and fatiguing. I observed, that even those who were, or apparently ought to have been most satisfied, were discontented with some one thing or other that passed. Madame de V—— danced with the Chevalier F——, a young Frenchman, and her favourite. But the Duke of G—— passed her in the evening and forgot his bow. Louisa gave her hand to the Prince of ——, and she was happy, her ruling passion was flattered.——But then I, her companion—who came with her, rejected the Count of Holstein, and passed my time with a Commoner, a Counsellor——This mortified her——“I had no spirit, no soul,” “I cannot conceive,” whispered she, “what you find so delightful in Ponthin. He is nothing, and besides I am almost sure that he is engaged to a young lady of great merit, long before he came here.”

“I am glad of it, my dear Louisa, he is then I hope happy, but the Prince, he is married, why then do you dance with him?” “O, but he is a sovereign.” “An amiable man, and

an entertaining companion is to me far preferable to a sovereign:—I like Ponthin—it is my whim, and I am perfectly satisfied with the choice I have made.” She shrugged her shoulder, smiled with an air of pity for my want of judgment, and joined the dance. How absurd are these distinctions! how ridiculous is all the bustle which is every day created! And for what?—for the empty advantages of public opinions; and how often do they most materially differ from the private ones! The very people by whom you were a few hours before flattered, caressed, and admired; now ridicule, despise, and condemn you. Ah! my friend, I look round the world;—I compare the great with the little—I seem to shrink from scenes of pleasure, and am half tempted to envy the cottager.

L E T T E R XX.

October the 20th.

BY the strangest accident in the world, I have heard of Werter:—and what have I heard of him!—that he is melancholy, languid, and unhappy!—that he will not see any one, and that he complains of me, he accuses me of indifference, of unkindness in leaving, without having consulted him;—he says Julia with her parting breath conjured him to protect, to watch over me, and I have left him, and the peaceful scenes I had been accustomed to, to plunge at once into the confusion of an unfeeling throng of dissipated beings. He reproaches me with gentleness, and with every art of soft persuasion he entreats my return.—Yes—I will return;—I have been long tired of the vain amusements I have met with here.—They are not suited to my taste, nor have they made impression enough to steal from me the most trifling recollection of Werter.—Last night we were at the theatre: on looking round the house, I perceived, in a box near us, Bequer, Werter's friend and companion;—our eyes instantly met—I started with surprise and joy—How impatiently did I wait for the end

of the act—at length the curtain was let down; and he joined us. He told me, that having business to transact in this town, he had left ——— yesterday; that he had called at my door, and hearing that I was at the theatre, had come purposely to see me.—“And Werter,” said I,—“He is not well,” he replied——“but I have a letter from him which will tell you more: he learnt from your servants that you were here. He knew I was coming, and gave me this commission, which I execute with pleasure——to-morrow I return, and in the morning I will call for your commands.”——I took the letter, trembling; and the moment I got home, I flew up stairs to read it. It was the first I had ever received from Werter——with what pleasure did I trace every line, and it was written by his own hand—he breathed in every sentence.——How I longed to answer it, and how tedious was the time of supper!—Even Ponthin was insipid.——I mentioned my intention of returning in a few days. “It cannot be,” said Ponthin, “we shall be undone without you.” “Surely,” said my aunt, “you will not leave us at this season, now that every thing is so gay.”—“My dear madam, my presence is become necessary at home--(Ah! Maria, did not Werter say it was necessary to him?)—I have heard from thence to-night—and I must go—it is with regret I part from you, but I trust we may soon meet again.” “My dear child

must then promise to see me again in a short time." I bowed. Ponthin sat mute with astonishment. At length he recovered himself, and enquired which road I took. I described the situation and distance. He was delighted, for it was so many miles nearer his own home.

—He was now much better than he had been, and had some thoughts of returning in a few days.——“Come, come,” said my aunt smiling, “let us not lose all our valuable friends at once: you, Ponthin, must stay and console me for the loss of Eleonora.” “You would have a wretched substitute, madam.” “But when,” turning to me, “do you depart?” “In three days from hence,” said I. And to that time, Maria, I have fixed it.—When I was alone I began to write——again I read Werter’s letter, and I wrote an answer. It was too tender—I did not like it, and wrote another. Ah! it was the very essence of friendship: I will send this!——I laid it by, took two or three turns about the room—then read it again.——It was not correct enough, there were some expressions which might be mended—I altered them, and spoiled it.—I must write a third—this will surely do, said I, as I finished it—this I think is cold enough—he cannot any way from this penetrate my ideas. It is formal, precise, and stiff——again I read Werter’s—how elegant! how affecting! it was genuine from the heart. “My studied letter, which is evidently from

the head only, will not bear the test of this—besides, it will betray me more.—Werter will readily see through the thin disguise, and condemn the awkward cheat.”——I threw it into the fire, and determined not to write at all.—I would give his friend a verbal message for him, it would look as if I fixed on returning before I heard from him, and was not entirely determined by his letter——I did so;—I begged him to remember me affectionately to all my friends, and particularly to Werter.——“And have you no letter for him?”—“None——I shall see him in a few days, tell him so, and he will not be surprised that I do not write.” He took his leave; and by this time Werter knows that I mean to comply with his request. Why did I not dare tell him it was to please him, and only him, that I so immediately complied with it? I should not have disguised this, had it been you who made the same demand.——Ah! cruel custom, it will not suffer us to speak as the heart dictates, and then it despises us for a mean concealment of the truth. What pity that hypocrisy should be so necessary to the happiness of every individual! the chief art of pleasing is to throw it like a gauze over our expressions: It should be transparent enough to let the truth be seen through—and, at the same time, so delicate and shining, that it should add a lustre to what it covers.

———Truth, without it, would be so easily attained, that it would be less valuable, and the men would not care for the possession of it——when once it is their own they have nothing left to hope, nor has their imagination any thing to paint.—The veil then may be seen through, but it must not be removed.

L E T T E R XXI.

October the 22d.

THE Count, who heard that I am about to leave this place, sent me this morning a note to entreat the favour of an hour's conversation. I gave it to my Aunt, who desired I would indulge his request, and appointed the time.—He came, and at my feet vowed eternal fidelity——told me his heart and hand were mine, and every future chance of happiness for him depended on me. I thanked with all the politeness he deserved; but declined the honour of the proposal, assured as I was, I could not return his affection in the manner it merited.—Ah! madam,” said he, “you love another—tell me, tell me, is not Ponthin the happy object of your heart—I am not blind to his merits——he has tenderness, he has honour, he has generosity: Yes, madam, he adores you, he has this morning allowed that my rank, my fortune, my earlier acquaintance with you—every thing authorises my prior declaration, he and will wait at humble distance till you have decided my fate. He said this with a noble tear rolling down his face—by heaven he did—and if Eleonora—if it is him you love, I will repay him for his exalted

submission—he shall have half my fortune——
 rank, in the eyes of Eleonora, is I know of
 no avail, yet he shall have all my interest: and
 ——(My God !) I will resign you to him——
 yes I will give you to him myself. What is
 there I would not do to contribute to your hap-
 piness ?”—I gazed at him with surprise.—Can
 this be, thought I, how have I mistaken your
 character ?——what generosity, what grandeur
 of soul. “ Speak, speak, Eleonora, is Ponthin
 the enviable”. “ No ; no indeed, my
 Lord. But your generosity,—your goodness,
 demands all my candour.—I will tell you, and
 tell you sincerely, that my heart is not my own,
 nor do you know the man who entirely engrosses
 it.” He threw himself on a sofa and hid his
 face. “ Ah ! my Lord,” said I, “ do not give
 way to despair—I know how to pity and feel
 for you, yet I cannot love another.” “ What
 is it you say,” he cried, “ it cannot be that
 your love is not returned. Is there a man who
 could be blind to it ? Oh ! name him, and he
 must, he shall be yours. What torment is equal
 to slighted love ?” “ Let us part, my Lord,
 and believe that you possess my utmost grati-
 tude.”——“ Will you not tell who it is ? if not
 Ponthin, who ?——Eleonora, allow me the only
 pleasure I can ever know, that of contributing
 to your happiness.” “ I cannot, my Lord, I
 dare not tell you—it is enough that he knows
 not of my attachment himself. Spare me, I
 beg of you—to no one but you would I have

said half as much ; but your generous warmth——the interest you seem to take in my happiness, has beguiled me of my secret——conceal it I beseech you. Adieu, my Lord, may you be happy !”—I left the room.—The Count staid some minutes, and then I heard him go down stairs.—My Aunt met me with surprise and enquiry painted on her features. “What have you done with the Count ?” said she——“He is gone, madam.” “Gone !” she repeated, “and does he not return to dinner ?” “No ;” “my dear Aunt. You cannot be a stranger to the intention of his visit here—he came to make me an offer of himself, which I have declined, and ”..... “Declined my Ellen ! Have you refused the Count Holstein ?——do you know his fortune, his interest, his power ?” “Ah ! yes.” “Well,” said this amiable woman, straining me to her bosom, “doubtless my dear girl knows, and consults her own happiness. But I could have wished——such a protector, Ellen——indeed I could have wished you had accepted him.”—Louisa came in, and we said no more on the subject. In the evening we had a party at home. They assembled, but the Count was absent——Ponthin looked pale and dejected. He chose a moment to approach me when I was alone. Every one seemed engaged. “You are going, Eleonora,” he said, “and you leave us all unhappy—The Count of Holstein is wretched. I have seen him——he

sent for me just now, and he is gone to bed with a high fever—the agitation of his mind is too much for him—but I do not wonder. And me too—but, Eleonora, you will let me be your friend. In that sacred character I will watch over you as my darling treasure—I will be your guardian angel. Will you allow me your friendship?”—“Most willingly, Ponthin. But you have so many excellent qualities, and such a heart, that I give you notice, all the advantage will be mine.”—He thanked me with rapture, and requested he might call and see me in his way home, which would be soon—“for,” he continued, “I cannot remain here when you are gone.” He asked me several times, in the course of the evening, “How I could be so chearful—you seem to enjoy the idea of leaving us—since I have known you, I never saw you in such spirits.” “The heart, you know, will sometimes shew itself in spite of form and etiquette. I am going to some friends who are very dear to me, and with whom I shall be happy—happier than these palaces can make me. I am not formed for so much magnificence; and, shall I own to you, the idea of a simple repast to-morrow evening by my fire side, fills me with a pleasure that I am not able to express.” “Shall you be alone, Ellen?—or is it the view of a *tête-à-tête* which affords you so much satisfaction?” “Ah! I cannot tell—but perhaps alone.” “And will you

suffer in the midst of your retirement one thought of Ponthin to intrude?" "Many—I will retrace the hours that you have brightened by your conversation—that you have added wings to, and with the most tender friendship will I wait the time that may bring us together again. Be assured I shall not easily forget you."

He held my hand to his heart, and whispered something, which I did not hear—his eyes, however, spoke his gratitude, and his attentions the whole evening were pointed. At supper he set next me—he tried to be cheerful, but he scarcely succeeded. There was a something in the idea of the last time, so unpleasant, so harsh—it is like shutting out every future expectation, and giving up yourself at once to sorrow and dismay—This struck me forcibly as I looked at Ponthin, and I would willingly have forgotten it was the last evening I was to listen to him. He would not take leave—he should see me again (he said) tomorrow—he would breakfast with us.—Adieu, Maria, it is very late, and I have not time to comment on this letter—I have given you a description of circumstances as they arose; I feel exhausted with the different emotions of this day, and will try to sleep. This is the last letter you will receive from

hence——To-morrow, early in the morning, I leave this place.

L E T T E R XXII.

October the 23d.

I AM returned, Maria, and with what delight am I seated at my little table in the dressing-room, that looks toward the fields ! The servants have adorned it with flowers, and the extreme neatness of the furniture gives it an air of peaceful simplicity that is very grateful to me.—It is an holiday, and the bells of the town are ringing. The distance, which is about half a league, mellows the sound to a softness truly harmonious, and inspires a pleasing kind of melancholy ; which, instead of oppressing, expands the heart, and leaves it open to every impression of tenderness and affection. It is almost dusk, and the rising moon plays on the trees of the avenue leading up to the house with a mild serenity which charms me.—I have not yet seen Werter. He has called here, they tell me, every evening for this week past.

This morning he was again here, and expressed impatience at my not being arrived ;—he enquired of the servants whether they had heard from me, and what time I had appointed.——

At four he returned, but I was not come, so that I fear he will not call again this evening. I have ordered them to bring my coffee in this room, and till it comes I will write on.—Ponthin was here——was here !—was at my aunt's, I mean, this morning before we were any of us down stairs.—I was the first who came into the room, and smiling at his impatience, enquired at what hour he had risen ?——He answered, “ I have not been in bed all night, Eleonora, I have been traversing my room, and watching for the dawn.”——“ That was not well done,” I said, “ you are very imprudent to hazard your health as you do ; consider, I beg, that I now feel myself interested about you——are we not friends ? and can any thing that so nearly concerns you be indifferent to me !—You have not forgot the league we have formed ?” “ No, Eleonora, never whilst my soul is animated by the breath of the Eternal, never can I forget you : the pure flame with which he invigorates my mind, shall burn for you alone——next to my God, you occupy every finer feeling, they are all centered in you ;—and henceforth, you are the ray of light that must conduct me through this globe. I know you, Ellen, I know

your heart, and my glory shall be to love and imitate you."

I was affected even to tears, and he passed his hand across his eyes. "No," he exclaimed, recovering himself, "this must not be—make allowance for me, Eleonora, and if in this trial the strength of my affection overpowers me, do not condemn, but pity me.—I shall be better, indeed I shall be better when you are quite gone. But this—this is too much." He caught my hand to his lips ;—I begged him to compose himself——talked of things very foreign from my heart—then wept—and talked again.——Ponthin did not speak a word. The ardour of his soul had full possession of his features, and he gazed at me in silence. My Aunt relieved us from this distressing situation, and we went to breakfast.——There is nothing so disagreeable as a formal parting ; but I went through the ceremony with all but Ponthin. When it came to his turn, I gave him my hand to lead me down stairs, and he put me into the carriage ; but just as it was driving off, he stopped it, and putting his head within the window :—"Ellen," said he, "I shall see you within a week."—I had not time for a reply, for bidding the man drive on—he disappeared.——Alone, and melancholy, how tiresome was the first part of my journey ; but I recollected it would convey me to Werter, and in an instant the scene

was changed. Every thing smiled around me, and the most enchanting illusions danced before my eyes. For a moment I lamented the Count.—We had sent in the morning to know how he did, and we heard that he was extremely ill—I was grieved at this event—but, self, how wilt thou interpose? I rejoiced that it was not Werter. This again changed my train of thought, and I arrived here in the happiest frame of mind imaginable.—I look forward, Maria, to happy days—days, unclouded by disappointment or distress. And yet, why this foreboding? I have no grounds for it—let me not search farther—it is, perhaps, the return to my native air—or the peaceful manner in which I have spent these last few hours—or the expectation of Werter, that has given this tranquility to my mind.—It matters not from what it arises, but the sensations it produces are too sweet to be reasoned away—and I will enjoy them in their full extent while they last.

L E T T E R XXIII.

October the 24th.

WERTER has been here—I have seen him, and I am happy—I know not what I said on his approach, but I know that never was rapture more strongly expressed, than in the look which he directed to me. He did not speak, but he flew to me, and held my hand to his beating heart—I asked him a thousand questions about himself—he answered them by enquiries about me. How I had been engaged? Who I had seen? And what could have kept me so long away? I related many scenes to him—painted in vivid colours the deceit—the imposition of the great world—told him the disgust I had conceived for it, the observation I had made on it—described to him several of the most striking characters, and spoke of Ponthin with delight. He listened and commented, and finished every sentence by expressing his joy at my return. What a different being has this visit made me.—Oh Eternal fountain of light! Why is it in the power of one created being to give such happiness to another?—I cannot reconcile to myself that what I now feel can arise from any other source than thy indulgent hand;

—Thou reignest over all thy works, and it is thy will that I should be satisfied with my lot.



L E T T E R X X I V .

November the 16th.

I WALK in these gardens, which once gave me so much uneasiness, and I feel a delight I cannot express. Every thing is changed, the same paths which before appeared so mournful, now court my footsteps. I do not sigh—my tears never flow, and I cannot conceive that there is in nature a more tranquil—a more happy being than myself.

L E T T E R XXV.

December the 10th.

I HAVE not attempted to go once into the town since I came home. I do not wish it, this place is every thing to me, and I continually discover new sources of amusement. Werter sees that the garden is over-run with weeds in my absence, and for some days past we have set about clearing them away—now and then he reproaches me that I do not work hard enough—he says I am idle, and to make it up I fetch him an apple and pare it for him to eat. You would have laughed yesterday had you seen us, his hands were too dirty to touch it, and I must cut it into slices, and put it into his mouth;—either he or I was awkward, and sometimes a piece fell on the ground; then he would chide and protest he would serve me the same when it was my turn. He has been here every day since I came home, and though his visits are not very long each time, yet the seeing him so constantly, gives a life to every moment.—When he is not here, I am expecting him—when he comes, I am pleased, delighted, happy, and for the first two or three hours after he is gone, I amuse myself by recollecting all he said, and

how he looked. You will laugh at me, Maria —I give you leave—perhaps I deserve to be laughed at, but remember it is to you, and you only I reveal all this. Between me and Werter is still that veil I once spoke of to you, and when I meet him it is a cambrick one I am obliged to wear, or his penetrating eyes would read my heart with as much facility as he reads Petrarch when in a still evening, in the honey-suckle bower, I listen to the sound of his voice.

L E T T E R XXVI.

January the 4th, 1771.

WE have got a new employment——it is the translation of some of Petrarch's Sonnets. Werter has chosen the 167th, and he has given me the 102d—I send them to you, Maria, that you may compare them, and tell me (I beg of you) whether we have preserved the turn of the originals. It is not for us to judge——Werter would be indulgent to mine, and I——could I see a fault in his?

S O N N E T CLXVII.

THOUGH form'd beyond the highest reach of
art,
It was not one fair hand alone cou'd bind:
But both, and those two beauteous arms, entwined
Such lasting chains around my captive heart.

A thousand sportive Loves, in every part
Of that enchanting form, sure refuge find:
Whence with a careless ease, amongst mankind,
Their pointed arrows they resistless dart.

Those love-inspiring eyes, and heav'n-arched brows!
 That angel mouth, whence such sweet accents flow!
 Those pearly teeth and rosy lips! display
 Charms, to which every mortal trembling bows.
 That hair, that forehead white as new fall'n snow,
 Exceeds, in lustre, summer's noontide ray.

SONNET CII.

IF 'tis not love, Oh! Cupid, what is meant
 By my strange feelings? and if love, explain,
 Why, if 'tis bad, it should such sweets contain;
 And if it's good, why should it thus torment?
 If my will guides it, why should I lament?
 And if against it, all regret is vain!
 O living death! O most enchanting pain!
 Whence is thy power if not with my consent?

And if I do consent! what folly's mine,
 That in contrary winds, in a frail boat,
 Thus without pilot trusts the open seas:
 So fair to sight, yet where such dangers float.
 Alas! I cannot my own state define:
 But burn in winter, and in summer freeze.

L E T T E R XXVII.

January the 27th.

MY days pass away with the peaceful serenity of a mind at ease—I have not a wish to form—every idea is concentrated in the sweet satisfaction of knowing that I am not indifferent to Werter. It is true, he has never said, “Eleonora, I love you”—but then every word he utters confirms it to me as strongly. He seeks no amusement but what I partake of—he tells me that he is restless and uneasy when he is absent from me, and that my presence brightens every scene. Werter tells me this, Maria, he listens to every thing I say with such unfeigned attention, and if at any time I am for a moment lost in a soft reverie (contemplating, perhaps, the happiness diffused around me from the charms of his society) with what gentle eloquence he interrupts me: he cannot bear that the least gloom should hang upon my mind. He is not noisy—Werter is naturally not very cheerful, yet he exerts himself, and frequently gives a turn of gaiety to the conversation, which I unaffectedly enter into—He consults me in every material circumstance relating to himself—he would be ever by my

side, yet think not we are always alone——Becquer, his friend Becquer frequently forms a trio with us. He is very dear to Werter, and I have conceived an esteem for him, which will not easily be effaced: This worthy young man lives in the town near this place, and Werter's mother inhabits it likewise, some similarity of sentiment has formed an attachment between them, which they equally cherish, though I have observed that in every thing of consequence Becquer consults Werter's opinion before he chuses to deliver his; this I have attributed to his consciousness of Werter's superiority of genius and judgment, which allows him at once to conceive and decide——but it may proceed from a happy accommodating temper, which is, I believe, natural to him—at any rate he is much in Werter's interest. Judge then if he is not well received by me.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

February the 10th.

I KNEW last night that I should not see Werter till this evening ;—and in the morning I walked out, intending to have passed an hour at the parsonage with Agatha, who has lately lost her little sister, and is almost inconsolable. The moon shone out with great splendour, and the air was delightful ; it had all the sweetness of a fine morning in the spring :—And instead of going the road way, I went round by the fields at the back of the garden ; I crossed the first path, and went through your favourite little gate, which you know has the ivy-seat at a few paces from it. I sat down, and taking Pastor Fido from my pocket, had just turned to that charming soliloquy of Amarillis, “ Care selve beate”——when I was interrupted by a sudden and violent cry : I raised my eyes, and saw at a small distance a youth running towards me, and beckoning with his hat for me to come to him ; I rose instantly, and took the path he was in, when he exclaimed in a tone of agitation and fright——“ Make haste ! make haste !”—I ran, and the moment he perceived

I was near him, he turned and almost flew;—I doubled my pace, and we arrived at the same instant at the door of a cottage, which the young man threw open, and taking my hand he pushed me in—crying out, “Ah! see: save, oh save her!”—Upon a wicker chair sat a woman with her feet stretched out, and apparently stiffened; one hand hung down by her side, and the other lay in her lap, her head was reclined on the back of the chair, and the paleness of death was on her face. Close to her stood a young woman lovely as an angel, with her hands raised, and clasped in each other:—her eyes were steadily fixed on the countenance of the object before her. “How is this, my dear girl,” I said, “have you nothing to relieve this good woman?” “No,” she replied, without altering her attitude, or ever looking towards me, but she spoke it in such a tone of voice as pierced my heart. “Not a drop of water?” said I, “fetch me some water quickly,” “yes,” said the young woman, but she did not move. The youth flew out, and returned instantly with some; I threw part of it in her face, and bathed her hands and temples with lavender, whilst the young man held the salts I gave him, to her nose.—“You are frightened, my good girl,” I said, “but do not alarm yourself, it is nothing—she will recover—she will recover presently.” At the moment she fetched a deep sigh, and opening her eyes, looked wildly

around her. "My God!" exclaimed the young woman, and dropping on her knees, "My God! I thank thee." "What is the matter, my dear child?" said the other, "what is this?—and you, Conrade, what ails you both?"—"Oh! she speaks, she speaks," cried the beautiful girl, "Ah! my mother," and seizing one of her hands, she pressed it to her bosom, and then wept violently. "Bertha, my dear Bertha," said Conrade, and ran to support her.—They were both on their knees by the side of the invalid, who looked tenderly on them:—"My dear Bertha," continued the young man, "be comforted, why do you afflict yourself so much? did not that good lady tell you she would do well? Ah! madam," raising his eyes to me, "you have restored her to us, and the benediction of Heaven be upon you." The mother turned towards me, "Explain this to me, madam, I have been ill, very ill have I not?—but I am better—my dear children, I am better;—and who is this lady?" "Ah! she is an Angel from Heaven," cried Bertha, "you were dead and she brought you to life." "And I," said Conrade, "I found her in the field.—My poor Bertha was very ill too, for I spoke to her, and she would not answer me—and she is still ill," looking attentively in her eyes, "let me fetch you a little water?"—"Oh! no, no, we are all well now," answered Bertha, rising, and in a graceful manner offering me a chair,

entreated that I would sit down, and receive thanks for my generous goodness. The manner she said this in——her action——the appearance of her mother, and the air of neatness, nay almost elegance, that reigned in the house astonished me.——I was too much taken up with the illness of the person before me, and the affecting scene that ensued, to observe this at once ; but sitting down, I had leisure to be more attentive to them : I first enquired of the good mother, whether she was subject to complaint, “ Never,” madam, she replied, “ I never was so seized before, and I know not what has been the matter, except that I believe I fainted.” “ A mere nothing,” I said, “ you have, perhaps, over-fatigued yourself with walking, and if this good little girl or her brother, (Bertha blushed, and gave Conrade a glance, which I did not understand, but which seemed to express a great deal) had thrown a little cold water in your face, it would have relieved you instantly.” “ Oh ! madam,” cried Conrade, “ she was so frightened !——that alarmed me, and I ran for assistance, for our servant is gone to town for provision. You were very good to come so immediately, and I believe, I called out rather rudely, for I scarcely knew what I said ; but if I did I beg your pardon.” “ And I too, madam,” said the mother, “ for the trouble I have given you.” “ You have it, my good friends, I rejoice that I have been of use to you ;

but tell me--how is it that I have never seen any of you before?—I live very near, and thought I had known all my neighbours.”——“ Ah! madam,” she replied, “I have been here but a very short time, and it is not for me at present to seek acquaintance.” There was an air of dignity around her, as she said this, which almost bordered on *hauteur*. “But I would have sought you, my dear friend,” said I, “and I flatter myself neither you, or my little Bertha, would have denied me that satisfaction:—what say you, Bertha, shall I be your friend?” “Most willingly, madam,” she exclaimed, presenting me her hand; “and this is my pledge.”——These people have seen better days, said I to myself; there is something in their appearance—their voice, and the language they use which bespeaks it. Bertha was dressed in a pale brown jacket and coat made of stuff, and bound with a light blue ribbon, a gold clasp fastened it at the wrists:—her hair hung in great profusion about a face that was truly angelic: such a complexion, and such beautiful dark blue eyes, with a mouth, and teeth, that the Graces might have envied. A plain blue ribbon, with a knot on one side, was bound simply round her head, which, instead of confining her hair, was here and there concealed by the flowing curls that hung carelessly about it. She seemed to be about sixteen, tall, indeed, of her age; and her air, which from her height was naturally

majestic, was so mingled with such a winning sweetness, that you could not tell which predominated. She had a thousand graces when she moved, and the expression in her features was enchanting. Her mother had been very handsome; but with that particular turn of countenance, in which the traces of melancholy were strongly marked: her figure was noble, and she had the most beautiful hand and arm I ever saw. There was a simplicity in her dress that seemed to say she had done with finery;—her gown was of the same stuff and colour as her daughter's, but without any ornaments; and her hair was so commanding, that it appeared at variance with dress and situation. Conrade was an animated, graceful figure of about nineteen: his eyes expressive to a great degree; his person elegantly formed, and his dark brown hair, untied, and hanging half-way down his back. This groupe was too interesting to pass unnoticed; and I found I could not leave them with the cold civilities that politeness only required. I longed to be better known to them, and yet, I feared to intrude:—but upon Bertha's giving me her hand, I warmly pressed them to return with me, and spend the remainder of the day. They declined it; but hoped I would do them the favour to call and see them soon.—“I will come to-morrow,” I said, “for I shall not be easy till I see your mother again, and in the mean time I will leave this little bottle of salts,

that if her illness should return, you may not be frightened, but know how to relieve her :— or you, Conrade, can step and fetch me ; it is but a little way,” said I, shewing him the house ; “ and you know, my friend, we can both run.” “ But I trust, madam,” said Bertha, “ my dear mother will not be ill again :—however I will keep the bottle, if it is only to induce you to return to us.” When the maid came home, I rose to go, and they begged I would not mention to any one what had passed ; for they wished to be concealed. “ It is very material to us,” said the mother, looking affectionately at me, “ that we are not known : but another time, my dear madam, you shall judge : at present, let me beg of you to keep our secret.” I promised to do so ; and pursued my walk—then sat an hour with Agatha, and returned to dinner. I could think of nothing but the scene I had quitted.—Werter came to tea—I felt uneasy that I was not at liberty to tell him all that passed ; but I respected the secret of these good people—and my promise was sacred.—Werter is very amiable, and he will not betray them. But how do I know, but it may be essential to them to be concealed even from him ?—when I know their story, then will I ask their permission to tell him ; and how delighted will Werter be in the society of such a family ! I determined not to let them intrude any more, and whilst he staid with me I gave

myself up to other subjects. We spoke of the Count, whom I had left at ———; and of Ponthin, who had promised to see me again.—“ I am impatient to know that young man,” said Werter—“ I am sure he has taste, and of that kind which fills my soul, or he would not have distinguished Eleonora.” I took my lute and played a tune to some words of Werter’s composing:—They were of that gentle turn, which distinguishes a timid lover at the approach of his mistress; and the last lines expressed the rapture of his heart, when he perceives he is beloved. I sung it with pathos—and Werter was moved—his compliment had sunk deep into my heart, and I had no other way of thanking him for it. But after all, my dear friend, what is it that I am about?—Perhaps I cannot determine—or I will not. What I am sure of, is, that Werter has honour, and that though he may be now deceiving, he will never betray me. No; I know him so well, that I am certain he would shrink with the same horror I should, even from the appearance of guilt. I may then trust him as the protector of my fame!—But my heart!—Ah! time will discover that!

E L E O N O R A.

V O L. II.

L E T T E R XXIX.

February the 21st, 1771.

I HAVE been again to this dear and amiable family. Bertha received me with the transports of a grateful heart, and her charming mother with an ease that delighted me.—Conrade was absent.—“I am come,” said I, “my dear friends, to claim your united promise. You know not how much I am interested for you, let me be a sharer in your troubles, for I fear”. . . . “Yes, indeed,” she replied, “we have had our share: but the Giver of all bounties has enabled us to support, with some degree of fortitude, the ills that have been multiplied upon us.” She uttered this with so sweet a resignation playing on her features, that I felt comforted.—“I have seen many changes,” she resumed, “and I will relate them to you, both, my dear girls: (forgive me; but I feel an affection for you too) that you may both judge of the vanity of human wishes, and not depend too much on

prospects of future happiness." (I was struck, but I remained silent.) "My birth is noble, of a family distinguished as much by their bravery as their rank. Of five children, I was the only daughter: and I unfortunately lost my mother before I was of an age to know her value. As I grew up, I was flattered, caressed, adored: the young men of fashion were all striving who could please me most, for my father had interest, and the person of his daughter was not displeasing. But their attentions were thrown away——accustomed from my infancy to be uncontrouled in my amusements, and always having plenty of money at my command, (for I had an independent fortune left me by my grandfather) I indulged myself, not in procuring the vanities which are so anxiously wished for by many, but in what was better suited to my taste and inclination, the searching out and relieving merit in distress. Visiting one day one of my poor pensioners, I found her busy in preparing some gruel, into which she was going to put a cordial that stood on a table by her. I enquired whether she was ill? "No, madam, but I have some neighbours in the greatest misery in the world; and out of your ladyship's bounty I am enabled to give them this little relief." "Let me go with you," said I, "perhaps I may be of service to them." She went into the street, and turning down a little dark alley, came to a wretched looking house, the door of which

she opened ; and desiring me to follow her, went up a ladder, rather than a pair of stairs : when she had climbed five of the steps (which was half way) she turned round to tell me not to be afraid, for it was very safe, though it looked so dangerous.—I followed her into a room, but good heaven ! what a scene was I witness to ! Upon some straw, in a corner of this miserable dungeon, lay extended, an elderly man, who seemed to be breathing his last.—His wife sat, or rather lay across the top of his straw, and supporting her husband's head on her bosom. She had no gown on, and indeed scarcely any covering but a man's coat, which her son had taken from his back and wrapt round her. He was a young man, apparently about twenty-two years of age, and was kneeling by his father's side, whilst the tears ran down his face.—What a spectacle for a tender generous mind !—I flew to them, and begged I might help to raise the poor man whilst he tried to drink some of the gruel.—He faintly shook his head—and the wife exclaimed, “ Ah ! no, we must die ; we must all die together ! ”—“ You must *not* die ! ” said I, “ Heaven has sent you succour :—whatever you wish for you shall have ; but do not, I beseech you, persist in refusing what may restore you. My dear mother,” kissing her hand, “ employ the means that God has sent you : you will offend *him*, by a refusal. Run for a physician : ” added I, turning to the

young man—"run quickly, whilst this good woman and I assist your mother in supporting your father." I looked at the son—and what a countenance was there!—to this moment it is imprinted on my heart:—it expressed at once anguish, famine, and despair; yet these combined, could not efface the exquisite beauty of his fine features—A ray of hope seemed to enlighten them as I made my request; but it was instantly succeeded by a crimson suffusion, for he cast a glance on himself, and observed the situation he was in:—the mother caught the hectic for a moment, and unbuttoning the coat, "take it, my son," she said, holding it to him, you know how loth I was to have it—take it, and fly for the relief the Almighty has prepared for us." He seemed to hesitate—"Oh! do not lose a moment!" I exclaimed—when suddenly snatching the coat he ran out of the room, and soon returned with a physician. I had put my cloak in the place of the coat; and after having dispatched the woman who conducted me there, for some refreshments, we prevailed on the worthy man to swallow a little cordial, which seemed of great service to him. When the physician arrived, and had felt his pulse, he pronounced his complaint to be more mental than bodily; but promised every assistance in his power provided he would himself contribute towards his recovery. "You are very low," said he, "but do not be cast down, all will be well

soon." I followed him to the door of the room—and, whilst he received his fee, enquired whether I might form any hopes?—"You may," he replied, "but they are yet precarious:—it must depend in great measure on himself—his mind is very much affected, and till that is healed I cannot determine." I returned to this suffering family, and after having procured every thing I possibly could for their ease and comfort in the place they were in, I attempted to make them chearful: but it would not do, their hearts were tuned to sorrow, nor could they vibrate to any other string. I begged they would inform me of their misfortunes, and what had reduced them to such distress. They complied willingly, they seemed to catch at my enquiry, that they might have an opportunity by communicating, to lessen in some measure the weight of grief which oppressed them:—and to what a tale of woe did I listen! Forgive me, my dear friends, that I have dwelt so minutely on this scene—Alas! I have not half described it. Why? Oh! why was the impression it made so fatal to me? Every look, every word is still before me, and never can I lose the remembrance of them. But I see you are affected, and I will spare you—besides, you cannot feel so interested in it as I did. It is enough to tell you, Mr. Menheil had been a merchant of some consequence; but that unusual losses, and repeated misfortunes, had reduced him from the affluent

situation he once enjoyed. He was above asking the compassion of his equals, and with his wife and son (who was in partnership with him) retrenched their expences, hoping that time and assiduity would replace them in their former station. But they did not succeed—they grew from bad to worse: nothing prospered that they undertook, and they were declared bankrupts: and at length reduced to the misery in which I found them. “But you shall not continue so,” cried I, rising and going to the excellent old man, “I am rich, and I rejoice that I can employ what I have in making others happy. Are your creditors satisfied? or what will satisfy them?” “Alas! they are contented,” said Mr. Menheil, “for they have had my all: and this dear, good woman (pointing to his wife) and my glorious boy—they have never once reproached me, but they have sold their cloaths—yes, even their cloaths to help to maintain me.”—“We have done our duty, my husband, and we shall yet live to see better times.” “You shall, indeed,” said I—“tell me what can be done for you:—but consult, my dear friends, consult amongst yourselves, and to-morrow—you know, my good sir, I am then to find you much mended. You have promised to follow your prescriptions, and I will engage your son to tell me if you are not scrupulously attentive to them: but how giddy I am! I was so pleased at seeing you

better, that I was going without discharging the little account we have together.—I am in your debt nay, but I must pay it.” I left my purse, and rose to go:—Young Menheil, whose poverty had not extinguished the good breeding, and the elegance natural to him, offered me his hand, but when we reached the top of—what was meant for stairs—an involuntary impulse induced him to draw back. “No, indeed, my dear friend,” said I, “I take you for my beau, and I shall not part with you till I get into the street: I will not then detain you, lest Mr. Menheil should want your assistance.” “I cannot thank you, madam,” he cried out, “I can only feel your goodness, and this last instance is too much!—a tear fell upon my hand as he led me down.—This was the first time I heard him speak; and I cannot describe to you the effect the sound of his voice had upon me.—My heart was unusually softened, and opened to every tender impression. Such merit (thought I) in such distress;—and the tear too—I did not forget that—it spoke more than all the rest. “Farewell till to-morrow I am to see you chearful.”—In short, the next day I went again, and I found that a sum, which I could very easily part with, would be sufficient to enable these worthy people to begin the world again.—I gave it them, and Heaven knows with what satisfaction I saw it prosper in their hands. Mr.

Menheil recovered surprisingly, he was soon well enough to be removed to a better habitation: and Henry, the blooming Henry, would frequently, with his mother, express their gratitude to their guardian angel, as they called me. Mrs. Menheil had given me the name of St. Bertha;—for I loved her, from the moment I first saw her: and she, charmed with the attentions I shewed her, strove to repay them by every mark of affection in her power. St. Bertha, then, was the name I went by with the father and mother,—but Henry—he scarcely dared to call me by any name at all: his eyes, indeed, would frequently tell me—I was more dear to him than all the Saints in the calendar: and now and then, by chance, a tender pressure of the hand revealed what he tried so carefully to conceal.—I was never happy unless I was at Mr. Menheil's—all the company I saw at home tired and fatigued me:—the attentions of the men, (for I was not eighteen) mortified me; and how impatiently I longed for the hour that I could steal away to my dear Mrs. Menheil:—for as yet, I thought it was her I sought. My father knew not of this friendship, and I had not sufficient courage to inform him of it: He knew that I frequently appropriated my morning hours to the relief of the distressed, but he never enquired what particular objects shared my bounty—and all my visits were placed to this account. Thus did my time

pass away, when my father one day called me to him; and after a long conversation, he, in a very affectionate manner, desired me to chuse out of all the gentlemen who visited at the house, and who made pretensions to me, the one I meant to distinguish. "I have not thought about it, my father." "It is time then, Bertha, they are not to be trifled with, neither my honour or your consequence will bear that——I shall expect your answer in a week from this time." He left me in astonishment! "I cannot marry any of them," said I——and I sat about comparing them with Henry——Ah! they will not stand the test——I cannot marry them.——When I was alone at night I wept, and the first moment I had to myself I ran to Mrs. Menheil, to tell her the cause of my grief.——"They are going to marry me," I said, "and against my will——I hate them all, and yet my father commands me to distinguish one. What can I do? how to avoid the misery that must be my lot?"——Henry, who was standing near me, turned pale, and staggering to a seat fell senseless on the floor. We flew to his assistance, his fall had stunned him, and it was some time before he recovered: when he did, he met my eyes, and pressing my hand;——"Did I understand you right, Bertha?" he exclaimed, (he had never before called me so) "Is it true that you are going to marry?" "No, never, never, m

friend," I replied, " unless it is to. . . . " here, covering my face with my handkerchief, I threw myself into Mrs. Menheil's arms, and burst into tears. " My dear children ! " she said, with a voice that would have soothed anguish itself, " how I pity you ! — but recovering herself, she added, in a tone that froze me, " Recollect yourself, Lady Bertha, consider the splendor of your birth—the dignity of your house — your fortune, and the thousand advantages of your person : — and what has Harry Menheil to offer in competition with these ? A noble heart, it is true, and un sullied honour — but his station in life, so inferior — his name, not known — his fortunes, broken : and but for you, undone." — " Ah ! " said I, " you kill me." — " Reflect a moment, my dear madam, and you will see the impossibility that the Count of Montmorenci should consent to an union of this nature ; and not for worlds would I have. " My mother, my dear mother," — interrupted Henry, " not for worlds would I have my Bertha's inclination forced ; I love you, (continued he, kneeling to me) I adore you ! and if". he stopped and looked attentively at me. I caught his glance — — " your *if*, is interpreted, Henry," cried I, " and I will be yours : — yes, I am persuaded our dear mother will not refuse us this" — I would have said request, but the word died on my tongue. — " Lady Bertha," she replied, " what is it you say ? let me en-

treat you to confider ;—indeed, this must not be". " You refuse me then, madam," I exclaimed, " it is well !—Yes, Lady Bertha will remember" " Will remember what, my beloved ? not what my unkind mother has said to her." " Her dignity, Henry, her rank—and remembering it, she will subject herself to" " Remember too, my dear Lady Bertha," said Mrs. Menheil, throwing herself on her knees before me, remember the numerous obligations we owe you ;—that we are all the children of your bounty ; and then think, whether it is for us to raise our thoughts to such an alliance." " Oh, my God !" cried I, embracing her, " are you satisfied ? Yes, my dear mother, it is Bertha, it is St. Bertha who sues to you." " Who sues !" cried Henry furiously, " when the whole world should kneel to her :—this is too much — no, Bertha, it is my respectable mother who sues to *you* ; who pleads for her Henry ; who intreats you would condescend to accept her son." " Be it so, my children," said this tender mother, softened to tears ; " I can do but as you would have me : and yet your father——Ah ! Bertha, what will he say ?" " He will consent, my dear madam, when he knows my happiness depends on it ;—he will consent."——" But if he should not," softly whispered Henry.——" Well, if he should not," I replied, " my fortune, independent of him, is not trifling, and"

..... " Oh do not talk of fortune ! will my Bertha allow me to aspire to her ?—Her fortune I care not for—what she has already in our hands is every day augmenting ;—and, though it will not afford the luxuries she now partakes of, yet it will procure every elegant, every rational enjoyment : and such I know is all that will be wished for by a heart like hers."

" Depend upon me, Henry," I said, " and my father will, I know, sanctify my choice."—He kissed my hand with rapture, and we remained together till the time of dressing arrived ; when I was to return, and with a much more contented heart than I had when I set out—to adorn myself to appear before my father.—Every morning I spent at Mrs. Menheil's, and the evenings I was obliged to give up to my other admirers.—At length the day arrived I so much wished and dreaded, " You are very discreet, Bertha," said my father, " for with all my penetration I cannot discover which is your favourite lover. Is it G——, or L——, or D——?" " Neither, Sir," " Neither ! it must be R—— then ; he, I think, stands the next chance." " I will not deceive you, my father," said I, embracing his knees, " I cannot love either of these men.—My heart is not my own ; it has been long given to an amiable and deserving object ; but he is not known to you, and only at such an extremity as this could I have dared to discover it."

“ And who is this amiable and deserving object,” repeated my father with an air of ridicule ;—
 “ and how is it that this object is unknown to me ? Bertha, if I thought !——but it cannot be. Tell me, I say, who is it ?” I proceeded to inform him ; and, you may be sure, I painted my Henry in the most favourable light——I concealed every circumstance that might induce my father to look upon him with contempt, and I pleaded for him with all the eloquence of love.

When I had finished, I begged him to consider how much my happiness was concerned, and told him, I left my cause in the hand of an indulgent parent. “ And thus,” said he, “ I decide it——if you persist in the resolution you have formed in marrying this merchant,——(well might you say unknown to me) I renounce you for ever. Your fortune, from your grandfather, I cannot deprive you of ;—nor would I, if I could ; assured, that the reflexion of having disgraced your house——of having sullied the noble blood of your ancestors, which from generation to generation has remained untainted, will be sufficiently humiliating, without adding poverty to the sting.—You know my determination, and you know too, that when I have once decided, I abide by it. You have your free choice, between a husband who would do credit to you, or the one

you speak of ; and you know the consequence ; to-morrow I expect your absolute answer."——

What a day did I pass ! I dared not go to Mrs. Menheil's, for I must have related our conversation ; and what a mortification would it be to my Henry !——I went into my own apartment, and I reasoned with myself on the subject ;——

My father, I knew, was generous and good, and that he loved me tenderly ; but then his ruling passion was birth and title——it was his darling theme, and his only wish :——he was, besides, inflexible in his will, and nothing could set aside his firm resolves.——To be renounced by my father——and by a father who had ever been so kind and good to me was terrible !——

But, on the other hand, to sacrifice my Henry to his ambitious views, was as bad. It would be impossible to repeat all that passed in my mind ;—I weighed every circumstance ; and, after a sleepless night, I determined once more to plead my cause before my father ; and if he resolved against me, openly to avow my choice, which was for Henry. The next morning I threw myself at my father's feet :——I prayed—intreated—wept——it did not avail me any thing. He was resolved !——“ And I too am resolved, Sir !” said I, rising——“ I have resolved for Menheil.”——“ Then from this moment we part, Bertha,” said he, with as much composure as if he had been granting me leave to set out on a journey. “ But take my

blessing with you, child, perhaps, in some future moment of sorrow and remorse, it may be some comfort to you to recollect, that your father, instead of cursing you, wished you every blessing that your own perverseness will admit of: very few, I fear, will be your portion here.—For when a man or woman matches out of their own line of life, however for a time they may gloss it over to themselves, wretchedness and misery must ensue.” “ And do you count for nothing, my dearest father, the virtues which are confined to no rank, and which but too frequently fly splendid palaces to inhabit humbler dwellings?” “ I talk not of virtues, Bertha, nor should you, for duty is one of them: the virtues are oftener neglected, even by those who possess them, than exercised.—I speak of education, of manners—the difference of idea between a woman of high birth, and a man of mean extraction:—When a man raises a woman, it is less perceptible, for they can at all times accustom themselves to scenes superior to those they have been used to; that is easily learnt. But when a woman of condition stoops to a man every way her inferior, she should weigh well, whether she can submit to what she must inevitably meet with: whether she can bear the reproaches of a vulgar mind;—that, conscious of its own inferiority, continually upbraids (as its only resource) the superiority of a wife: which is, of itself, sufficient to breed

contention between them;—even though the wife should never claim it:—for it is the common error of the low, to level all minds to their own: and knowing how *they* should act, they suppose others must necessarily think the same. “Ah! Sir,” said I, “It is I alone am in fault; if I had but introduced Mr. Menheil to you, you would have been convinced:—allow me but time;—his education has been liberal, and his heart is noble as your own.” “The die is cast, Bertha, and I wish you happy in your choice. I bless you, my child! but this is the last time we shall meet. Will an hour be sufficient for you to make preparations for your departure?—Mr. Menheil has, I suppose, a house to receive you, and I shall not expect you at dinner:—I would save you the mortification of hearing your own disgrace published, and I must dismiss the men I had allowed the privilege of visiting you.” “O how should I glory in my choice, if my dearest father would approve it.—How!—can such a heart as his, so noble, so generous, be deaf to the voice of nature.” “No more, Bertha, we part this day, and part for life.” He embraced me, and walked out of the room.—He left me motionless with surprise:—I continued for some time in the same situation, till I was roused by my woman, who came to me in tears, and asked why her master had given her orders to pack up all my cloaths? “Because I am going on a

visit," said I, "and I take every thing with me." My hour was nearly expired!—I could scarce bear to quit the attitude in which I had received my father's last embrace, nor can I describe the effect it had upon me; it was almost a living death——it was a final separation before we ceased to exist——I could not comprehend it.——But going into my own room, I assisted my servant to put my things together, and I quitted a house which had been so dear to me, in which I had passed every tender scene of childhood; and where I had never known a care till so lately.

When this circumstance happened, my brothers, who were all in the army, were every one absent from home, and I could not see either of them. I went immediately to Mr. Menheil's, and finding him alone in the parlour, I threw myself on my knees before him:——"I have now no father but you, my dear Sir," said I,——"Oh protect me as your child!"——He raised me up, and embraced me:——When Mrs. Menheil, who had heard the sound of my voice, came hastily into the room, and received me from him with all the transports of maternal affection. I had never experienced such caresses from a mother—she died when I was so young; and I found them cordials to my heart.——I related to her what had passed, and she embraced me again.——"If my son

should not prove himself worthy of this generous conduct," said she, "we will forget he ever existed. But he will—I know he will;—he adores his Bertha." My Henry entered—he flew to me, and all my cares were forgotten. Mrs. Menheil repeated to him what I had told her, and he expressed his gratitude in a stile peculiar to himself—for he was every thing that was amiable.—In a few days we were married.—How happily did our time fly away?—Louisa Menheil, a first cousin of my Henry's, lived with us. She was beauty in its utmost sweetness; and her heart as amiable as her person was lovely. How happy was our little society!—And I must truly say, I knew no sorrow but that of not having my dear and honoured father reconciled to a daughter who loved him most affectionately.—I, however, frequently heard of his welfare; but then, I was told, that he never once mentioned my name, nor would he suffer it to be spoken of in his presence. About this time my youngest brother returned from an expedition against the ———. He had received a wound, the cure of which was a long time effecting, and they feared it would terminate in a decline.—He was ordered to his native air, and he arrived with the pleasing expectation of being nursed by the tender cares of an affectionate and beloved sister, who had ever been his darling favourite. His first enquiry was for me,

and the reply my father made was, "that I had been a long while dead." "Dead!" he exclaimed. "Yes, dead to me. She has married an unknown, and she shares the fate of her husband." "Ah, Bertha! my poor Bertha!" said William. "Her name is never mentioned to me," said my father, "this is the first time I have heard it since she went, and I desire it may be the last." William obeyed, but he determined to see me. One morning as we were sitting at work——my mother, Louisa, and myself—I heard a step upon the stairs, and in an instant, my brother rushed into my arms. O with what delight did I return his embrace! He paid me the most refined compliments on my marriage; had I given him a prince for a brother, his congratulations could not have been more elegant——how grateful were they to my heart! He desired to be introduced to my husband. Prepared, by my father, for something mean and low——how astonished was he when he saw and conversed with my Henry! He was charmed with him; and, in the most liberal terms, offered him his friendship——which Mr. Menheil received with a grace that was all his own. This dear brother made us frequent visits; and, in a short time, I could discover that Louisa had her equal share of them:——he contracted a rapid affection for her; and he soon made me his confidante. "I do not at all wonder," said I, "that you

love Louisa ! It is the effect of her innocence and beauty ;— and you do well to consult me, who you know must be favourable to you, or, I should pay but a poor compliment to my own example.—However, my dear brother (I added) you know our father's opinion on this matter ;—consider what will be the consequences of the connection you wish to form, and determine whether you can relinquish the advantages you now profess, for the quiet retirement of a domestic life.” “ I have nothing to balance against it,” he replied—“ my marrying Louisa will not deprive me of my rank in the army !—it is of my own acquiring, and I shall enjoy it whilst I neither dishonour my country. And, for any other advantages, my sister—what are they compared to love ?” “ There is my father's favour,” said I, “ his protection—his interest—and his fortune.” “ And there is Louisa !” he cried, “ Well,” I said, “ you shall have nothing on my part to regret. I am too happy myself to oppose an union of inclination ;—nevertheless, consult the Count of Montmorenci, and hear what he has to say ; perhaps he may be more favourable to a son, than he was indulgent to a daughter.”

He consulted his father, and received the same answer I had done ; but in much more violent terms. He threatened to disinherit him,

and to wreak his utmost vengeance upon him : but William was too much in love to fear. He proposed himself to Louisa, who adored him ; and not without reason, for he was formed by the hands of Love, and animated by the breath of the Virtues.—They were married, and we still continued living together. Our riches daily encreased, and our purse was in common. Before the twelve months were at an end, I lay-in of a son, who lived but a few short weeks, and then expired in convulsions. This was the first distress I experienced ; and I was a long time recovering a blow which was so severely fatal to my happiness. Time, and the affectionate attention of our little circle, at length reconciled me to this event, which was the fore-runner of so many calamities. I was recovering my health and spirits, when a special order arrived for William to join his regiment : which was immediately to embark for the attack of a garrison very strongly defended.—What a stroke for Louisa ! As for my brother, though he felt as a man, he so well acted the soldier, that the most penetrating eye could not have discovered his regret. He wondered why a regiment, so lately returned from very hot duty, should be so soon ordered out again—it was not customary—and he enquired into the reasons. “ It is,” said the agent, “ because the officers are all brave men, besides, the Count of Montmorenci has made particu-

lar interest for this arrangement ; he has spared no pains to effect it ; for he has a son in the regiment who has already distinguished himself ; and will doubtless, on this occasion, add to his laurels." " Ah ! " cried William to me on his return, " this is a scheme of my father's !—but be it so—I will prove to him, that William of Montmorenci knows what is due to the character of a soldier ; and that his union with the most enchanting of women will not prevent his supporting the honour of his house." Louisa never once attempted to detain him. When my brother was not present, indeed, she would frequently indulge her tears—but, the moment he entered, she wore an air of cheerfulness, and even pretended to set about the preparations for his departure with alacrity. What a trial for a tender and affectionate wife ! Her husband, in whom her life was bound up, was going to leave her—and he was to expose himself to the very face of danger. But then he had the address to make her believe his ready compliance with this event, and the opportunity he should have of signifying himself, would be the means of reconciling my father to them. And she even piqued herself upon the sacrifice she was making to the father of the man she loved. Poor Louisa !——It was not till he was gone that she felt the whole weight of her affliction : and then—but I will not describe scenes which must re-

call distress in its most poignant form. The first letter she had from him, was a great alleviation to her sorrow,—it convinced her of his welfare, and the strength of his attachment:—he did not mention his regiment. The second she received, contained assurances of his love!—spoke of his brother officers, and gave her hopes of the return of his company immediately after the reduction of the fort.—A third came—it breathed the very spirit of valour. They were on the eve of the attack, and they were certain of victory.—Louisa was to prepare for him the attribute of applause—it was to be her smile of approbation, and the requisite tear of grateful rapture for his success. Oh! my glorious brother! —Why was the tear of misery to flow from the same source?—In less than three weeks after this, when we had just finished our dinner; and had drank to the success of William, a soldier knocked at the door, and putting in a small box, and a letter directed to me, said it required no answer, but he had orders to leave it there. With what trembling haste I opened the letter—never can it be obliterated from my memory—it was from the colonel of the regiment, and contained these words:

HOW cruel, that the success of many should be fatal to the repose of few!—Madam, your valiant brother is no more. But

he died a hero——even I, madam, envied him his death. He was the first at the attack——it was vigorous, but the repulse was general; himself, and two other officers only, maintained their posts. In an instant our men were rallied, and we received the fire of Etna.——Our second attempt was more fortunate, we made a breach, and gained a turret, your brother was the first who mounted:——but a ball took him in the side, and he fell. “It is nothing,” said he, buckling his belt tighter; and again he gained the height—glory streamed around us——the first shout of “victory” was heard——the besieged flew; but, like detested cowards, in flying fired another volley.——My boy, my William, the pride and glory of my regiment, fell. His wound was mortal; but it was not decisive, till he had taken his gorget from his neck, and giving it with his sword into my hands, with a firm and determined voice desired I would have them delivered to you——that in case his wife, (his voice faltered a little) should bear a son, they might be given him, as the dearest legacy of his dying father——(“And he will conquer the world with them,” interrupted Bertha, rising and striking her hand enthusiastically on her heart; which beat with the utmost violence)——I send you the pledges, madam; but, in the pride of my heart, I have bound his victorious sword with laurel: let it not be re-

moved, but preserve it as it is, till the son of my valiant hero draws it again in the service of his country. Then shall these boughs be hung upon his father's tomb, and fresh ones shall be required by the offspring of the House of Montmorenci.

CONRADE DE BENTHEIM.

Louisa was sitting next me when this letter arrived; every pulse fluttered with impatience. —“ Well, Bertha!” said she, at least fifty times whilst I was reading it —“ Well, Bertha! what am I to expect? Ah! I see, I see your countenance betrays you—give me, give me the letter!” “ Be comforted, my sister,” I said, “ for the sake of every thing that is dear to you, command yourself.”—She snatched the letter from my hand——it was in vain that either Henry or myself dissuaded her from reading it——she persisted. “ Well,” she said, and is the haughty Count of Montmorenci satisfied?”——she uttered this in a shrill, screaming tone of voice, partly from pain, and partly from the horror of her situation.——“ Ah! no,” she continued softly, the expiation is not complete;——he is but half revenged:——but it will shortly be accomplished,——I shall die! Bertha——I shall die——I feel it——but I will act nobly: let the Count

have this letter, and tell him Louisa sent it him:—that she sent it to him to glut the darling passion of his soul; which will rejoice in the exalted manner in which he has murdered two unfortunates. But Henry——Bertha——I charge you both by every thing that is holy, that if the child I shall soon give into your hands should survive me, you never will suffer this cruel Count to sacrifice it to his vengeance. Swear to me, that if you can avoid it, he shall never see it:——That you will protect it against the fury of this oppressive tyrant;—and, if it should be a boy, give him that sword, the laurels of which were so dearly earned. But let it not bias him in the choice of his profession—let him be free to chuse. Thus would his father have said.”——In the anguish of our hearts we bound ourselves by the most solemn ties to fulfil her request, and we promised to cherish and preserve it as our own.—She was seized with convulsions, which brought on an early labour, and she died in giving birth to our darling Conrade—Sweet suffering Louisa!—even at this instant, when so many years have smoothed the edge of my distress, even now can I not refuse a tear to your fate. How bitterly did both Henry and myself lament your loss; and that of our dear, our noble brother.—The letter I had received I kept, and carefully preserved it as a precious relic for my Conrade—the copy I en-

closed, as Louisa's dying request to my father. —I informed him of her death, and the manner of it; and I condoled with him on the loss of a son, who was such an ornament to the world. —The next day I received, without any direction, the following note:—

“MY son has died gloriously—and I revere his manes. But I am not transported, for scenes of horror are familiar to me. This has but added one bright gleam to the illustrious House of Montmorenci—and as it was acquired by the sword, let it be conveyed to me; and it shall be hung up with those of his ancestors. It will not be the only one which is bound with laurel.

FREDERIC OF MONTMORENCI,”

These few lines were characteristic of my father:—they spoke his feelings, and I would willingly that the sword had been in his possession. Alas! it had been too fatal to wish it continued in the family—but the trust was sacred, and I would have sacrificed my life sooner than have given it into any other hands than those of Conrade. I wrote him an answer, at once respectful and determined. In which I assured him, that nothing could induce me to part with those sacred relics till I delivered them

to the son of my departed brother ; who was the only heir to them :—— and who would, I doubted not, employ them as they deserved. In about an hour I received, without any direction, as before, these few words :

“ YOU refuse me then the sword ?—— I know of no son that William of Montmorenci left behind him :—— his name dies with him. As for the boy you speak of—that sword will frighten him !

FREDERIC OF MONTMORENCI.

Conrade grew, and my beloved husband took as much delight in him as I did. Often would he wish we had a daughter, that the families might be again united, and Conrade be indeed his son. His wishes were soon accomplished, my Bertha was born.—With what rapture did my Henry receive her from me, and how fondly, how affectionately was he attached to me ? Ah ! my father, one of your predictions was at least never fulfilled—for my Henry was the best of husbands. Soon after the birth of our little girl, we had the misfortune to lose both Mr. and Mrs. Menheil, who died within a few months of each other. This was a new affliction to us, but the innocent prattle, and engaging manners of our lovely children soon employed all our attention : and happy in our-

selves, and them, we extended our views no farther. Our fortune was ample, yet Mr. Menheil still continued his merchandize; and I never thought of contradicting what I fancied contributed to his amusement. We lived with elegance, indeed with splendor; but never, after I became the wife of Henry, would I allow them to give me any title—that of Mrs. Menheil was my highest boast, and except that Henry would, sometimes in a frolic, insist upon serving me with my former eclat, we never once recalled the found of Lady Bertha. Five years more elapsed, and I never saw my father: indeed we often met in public, but there he never observed that I was there; neither did he pretend to avoid me. He would look at me with the same indifference that he would at a total stranger—how different were my emotions when I looked on him!—I have often wondered how it was possible that he could thus stifle every tender sensation; yet he did, and that without altering a feature of his face. In all this time I had not seen my brothers. The eldest married according to my father's most sanguine wishes. He married the heiress of an ancient house, and an amiable woman, who brought him a large fortune—but he died in a few weeks after his marriage, and not leaving any heir, my father turned his eyes upon Edward—but he never could persuade him to marry. He had chosen the army

as his mistress, and his ambition was to attain the utmost height of profession. The Count could not blame this ; — it had been the child of *his* affections, and his son was but treading in his steps. He ceased to persecute him—and he was looking out for an alliance for Joseph, when he received the sad news of his being blown-up in endeavouring to spring a mine, which was, alas ! but too well executed. — One would have thought that fate conspired against my father : — but his children died in the bed of honour, and was satisfied. His hopes were again turned towards Edward — he was now his only child (for I had ceased to be so from my marriage) — But Edward, who inherited all his firmness, could not be persuaded to sacrifice his happiness at the altar of Hymen ; and it was agreed, that he should take his own way ; — my father trusting, that time would reconcile him to the thoughts of settling.

Thus was I continually losing some one part of my family — but my greatest trial was yet to come, — Henry, my beloved Henry, was seized with a fever, which baffled the utmost reach of art. Now was I indeed wretched ! — I wearied Heaven with prayers — but Heaven was inexorable — his destiny was decided. — — I never left him a moment, and one evening taking my hand — “ Ber-

tha, my dearest wife!" said he, "what do I not owe you for all your goodness—but I cannot repeat the numerous obligations I have to you — my time must now be employed in a request which is very near my heart. You know with what earnestness poor Louisa recommended her child to our care, and how anxious she was to preserve it from the Count of Montmorenci—you know, too, how scrupulously we have observed all she said.—I foresee, my love, you will have some trouble to keep this injunction—your brother Edward is the only remaining son of your family; and he never will marry—then Conrade is the heir of the title and estates. When I am dead, perhaps, your father's hatred may cease, and he will wish to get Conrade into his possession, that he may model the heir of his fortunes after his own plan—you know what that plan will be. He will teach him to despise and treat with contempt the daughter of your Henry—he will force his inclinations—and not only oblige him to embrace a profession he may perhaps dislike, but he will persist in regulating his future happiness by his opinion.—This, my Bertha, would be but ill discharging the trust reposed in us by Louisa, or rewarding the attention of the charming boy, who loves us as his parents.—Tell me, Bertha, that you never will consent to this."—"I have sworn it, Henry, I have sworn it to Louisa; and again I repeat

my oath to you. The son of William and Louisa, shall never, with my consent, be subject to the will of the Count of Montmorenci—nor shall the daughter of Henry and Bertha depend upon any, Conrade, for her future husband.—But this, you know, my Henry is to be guided by their own inclinations—the dear children shall not be separated, and if they should love each other, nothing shall divide them. Alas! my beloved husband died! But I dare not dwell upon this subject—I will proceed. He had divided his fortune between us—half he left to me, and the other half he gave to Conrade, and his Bertha.—Surely grief will not destroy, or I should have died with Henry! but I have done.—Our children grew up together, and the tenderest affection united them. When Conrade was fifteen and his education completed, I gave up to him the dear deposit which I had so faithfully guarded—I related to him the history of his family—and, with an aching heart, I bad him chuse—I gave him the letter—never shall I forget the fire, the energy, with which he read it.—“And this was my father!” he exclaimed. “Ah! my dear aunt, I do not hesitate a moment—the sword and gorget shall be mine, nor shall the glory of my father be tarnished in the hands of his son. With this letter on my heart, and the sword in my hand, I could encounter an host of ene-

mies.—O that I may but serve under Conrade de Bentheim !” The sword was taken from the box—he kissed it with reverence, and folded it to his heart—at this moment Bertha entered—---“ See,” said he, holding them both to her—“ read this letter, my dearest Bertha ; and tell me, whether I have done well in the choice I have made. Look at this sword was it to be resisted ? this was the sword of my father !” Bertha read the letter, and melting into tears—“ Oh ! Conrade,” she sighed out, “ but you could not do otherwise—yet this is” Conrade’s countenance changed—“ Does not my Bertha approve ?” “ Oh ! yes, she does, she must, the pursuit of honour is your duty ; and resignation shall be mine.”—I immediately procured him a commission, and it chanced to be in the same regiment of which his uncle Edward was commander. They were ordered out, and Conrade did wonders ;—he soon distinguished himself,—and the young Montmorenci was adored throughout the ranks. Happy were those who could fight by his side. He was esteemed by his officers, and his general desired to be better known to him. But what was his surprize, his pleasure, when he learnt from himself that he was the son of his brave brother ! He embraced, and promised him all his interest and protection. Conrade, who felt for him all the respect he merited, with a noble freedom, received, and returned, the marks of

friendship:—but he dreaded the protection of the heir to a house, whose pride had been the destruction of his parents. They were absent for near two years: and in that time Edward became so much attached to Conrade, that he would have adopted him as his own. Conrade was grateful for, but declined the honour:—he represented to him how highly he should value his friendship, but that he had already an establishment equal to his wishes—that he was master of his actions—that his heart had long been disposed of—and that he was resolved never to subject himself to any situation which could interfere with the accomplishment of his most sanguine hopes. Edward was astonished! “And, do you think,” he said, “that I would attempt to controul you in an affair on which future happiness depended? No, my dear nephew, I wish only to draw you to me by affection, not to bind you by the chains of duty.—I never mean to marry, and if I did, my child, I could not present an heir who would better support the virtues of our ancestors than you will. “Your sentiments,” replied Conrade, “declares your generous, noble spirit; and such a one I could obey; but you have a father, Sir, to whom I would not be subject for the wealth of worlds!—nor would his title give me consequence, but in recollection, that its dignity has been preserved in the persons of a William and an Edward.”—“Beware! Con-

rade," interrupted my brother, "I respect my father. " And *I* respect *mine*, Sir," cried Conrade, "and respecting him can I stoop to his oppressor, and the destroyer of my mother? No, Sir, marry, and give me a friend who will one day shine with all your virtues; and indeed give lustre to your house. As for me, I wish not for the title; the name I bear, and the sword of my father is sufficient to gain me honour, and with that I can defy the world."—"Enough," replied Edward, "you are a noble fellow; and such a one that I would be proud to shake hands with even in death." The campaign finished, and Conrade returned to us glowing with the ardour of martial conquest, and anxious to lay his laurels at the feet of Bertha. He had consequently corresponded with us during his absence, and had prepared us for an interview with Edward; who was resolved once more to see a sister, the traces of whose features were quite effaced from his memory. He came, and the pleasure we experienced was mutual.—Conrade received him with gratitude and respect; and he presented Bertha to him, as "the woman of his heart—and his future wife." Edward beheld my Bertha with marks of the highest approbation—but it is not for a mother to repeat the praises of her darling child.—In a week after this, a letter was brought to me by one of my father's servants;—this was the contents:—

“ E D W A R D has sworn never to marry, and an oath is not to be trifled with. He talks of a boy, whom you have educated, and to whom you have given the sword that was William of Montmorenci's. It has inspired him with valour——and he did not disgrace it. A youth who has courage, and knows when to exert it, may in time prove an ornament to those with whom he is connected :—I am old, and it is time I chose an heir. This then is the one I fix on : let him pronounce, whether he can support, without being dazzled, the dignities of such a house as mine :—and whether he can encounter the splendour of an high alliance.

FREDERIC OF MONTMORENCI.

To this letter Conrade dictated and sent the following answer :—

“ T H E youth you speak of, Sir, owes his courage to the blood of his father ; and his valour to the example of his uncle. His undaunted resolution he has from you : for you gave his father an opportunity of making him that glorious legacy, which shall accompany him through the world. You deprived him of a mother ; but you have given him an aunt, who has taught him to despise misery in splen-

dour, and to know the value of happiness amongst his equals.

CONRADE OF MONTMORENCI."

I feared the consequences of this letter;—I imagined it would exasperate my father; and I trembled at the thoughts of his revenge.—Judge of my surprize, when, in a short time afterwards, I received this note:—

"THIS boy will do—I begin to believe he is indeed the son of William, and as such I shall receive him.—Prepare him for this honour. I shall expect him at your hands, and the only thing I shall require of him is, a submission to my will in point of marriage.—That I insist upon.

FREDERIC OF MONTMORENCI."

I wrote my father a very long letter in answer to this. In which I informed him that I had sworn (and reminded *him* of the solemnity of an oath) never to relinquish the care of Conrade—that he was mine by the will of his parents—that his inclination, which I was determined never to force, prompted him to continue with me, and that in point of marriage, his faith was already engaged, which I was persuaded no

power could ever induce him to break.—I thanked him for his intentions, but informed him, that Conrade was contented.—The messenger soon returned with the following:—

“THE oath of a woman is of no avail:—They are not in themselves of sufficient consequence to make what they say binding. How is it that you are always to dispute my will?—But I like the boy—he is not yet of age; and the law shall determine which is the properest guardian for him; you, or I.—You know that I am not to be played with.

FREDERIC OF MONTMORENCI.”

What a consternation did this put us into:—Bertha was scarcely to be comforted, and I felt the severest sorrow.—Conrade begged we would make ourselves happy—“at the worst,” he said, “I can but be his till I am of age, and then I will fly back to my charming friends, and recompence myself for my lost time.” As to myself I saw nothing so terrible in Conrade’s being with the Count.—The marriage he would have insisted on—but Conrade would have insisted too; and his faith I would have trusted, had it been for seven years.—But then the promise I had made his mother, and my husband, I resolved to keep inviolate—nothing

could shake my determination, and I would try it in all the courts in Europe. We sent for our counsel, and for all the advice we thought necessary. Various were the opinions.——The Count had such amazing interest——the young man in question was the only heir to an house of such consequence.——I had no witnesses of what his mother had requested, and as to the young man's choice determining it, he was not of age, and had therefore no voice in the matter.——Conrade felt a horror at the thoughts of residing with the Count—he could not bear to be indebted to him for even a kind look, nor would he leave his adored Bertha.——We were advised to disguise ourselves, and passing for people of an inferior class, to go to the frontiers, and there wait the decree. If it was against us, we might escape to a neighbouring state, and if it was in our favour, we might return unmolested. Here then, madam, we are——less than a month will decide our fate.——When the cause is to be heard, I must be present, but my children shall remain here, and in the mean time you may imagine, I wish as much as possible to avoid the sight of every stranger. The circumstance that conducted you hither, and the humanity of your attention to a person unknown, has induced me to repose a confidence in you, which would be fatal to us were it revealed; but you seem above disguise, and seeing the necessity of it, will I am sure,

preserve our secret.—Here this charming woman finished a story which had gained my utmost attention.—Maria, what a noble fellow was William!—And how I adore Conrade!—I wish he could be known to Werter, but that is impossible—it would be unjust to attempt it.—Werter must not know of their being here. And you, my Maria—but I need not caution you, the request of Mrs. Menheil to me would ensure your silence as much as if you had made me the promise.—I cannot persuade them to visit me; nor could I, after what I have heard, expect it, but I have said I will see them frequently, and I mean to do it.—Adieu, my dear friend; I have written a very long letter, but I could not break off in the middle of such a story, and I send it to you all at once.—Farewell!

L E T T E R XXX.

April the 7th.

O H ! Maria, what have you said ? Is Werter then one of those insidious characters, who, conscious of their own power of pleasing, avail themselves of the indulgent gifts of nature, and the more refined additions of art to inspire affection in the heart of an innocent and virtuous woman, whom they only mean to deceive. Who, amuse themselves by feigning an affection which their conduct implies they feel in its utmost extent, and which by every art in their power—by every elegant persuasion, they wish to make the woman understand. When they see that the constant course of their attentions have made some impression on her, and that they are become necessary to her happiness, they shield themselves behind the mean evasion of “ I never told her I loved her—what right had she to suppose so ? I gave up all my time indeed to her, because I found nothing better to employ it ; but she is a fool if she supposes I meant any thing more than *badinage*, or, perhaps, I might feel some share of friendship for her”——Oh ! ye, who thus impose reflect a moment——a young woman, pleasing in her

person, amiable in her manners, of an uncor-
 rupt heart, lives in the bosom of her family in
 the utmost peace and harmony. She is distin-
 guished by a man of the character I have de-
 scribed; his visits are received by the family,
 who believe him serious, and the unsuspecting
 girl admits him to a heart that knows no guile.
 — She supposes him to be the man he appears
 — possessed of every virtue cultivated by the
 graces, and she the happy object who has called
 them forth. Day after day passes on, and
 each as they roll bring an addition to her hap-
 piness. To the parents he displays sentiments
 of worth and honour——for the young people
 he has constant sources of amusement——but
 this distinguished one is the idol of his vows.
 His attentions are too pointed to pass unobserv-
 ed——they are perceived by every body, and
 every body congratulates her upon having gain-
 ed the heart of so valuable a young man.
 What pleasure she takes in hearing him prais-
 ed! and she begins to assure herself of the rea-
 lity of this——every hour he becomes dearer to
 her. In the mean time he has never said, “Will
 you marry me?”——but he has said every thing
 else. She has, however, no tie upon him.——
 Delicacy prevents any of the family from the
 interfering, or enquiring into his intentions——
 they fancy them too public to admit a doubt.
 ——Of a sudden business or pleasure calls him
 to some other quarter of the world——he takes

his leave, and parts from her with the greatest emotion. He says no more, but she impatiently expects his return—he is her only hope—she forms no wishes but for him.—Months move by, and no tidings of him. At last, she hears he is married to another.—What a shock is this!—it strikes to her heart. She is astonished at his deceit, but she conceals her grief: pride, obliges her to conceal it, and it knaws the deeper—it preys upon her spirits, and destroys her constitution. She pines away her life, and at length she resigns it, a martyr to the deceptions of a man who has no one plea to offer in his excuse;—but, “That she ought to have seen he was only amusing himself.” Her respectable family!—what compensation can be made to them for such a loss. They adored her, and she is sacrificed in the bloom of life.—Maria! my heart bleeds at this spectacle—and I fear, I fear it is too often practised. But Werter—it is impossible—Werter can never be this mean, this despicable being—who to gratify the vanity of his heart, thus ruins the peace of a whole family. Such a man would take your purse on the highway—he would enter your house by midnight, and despoil it of its treasures, but that he fears the ignominious punishment that must ensue.—He would sap the foundation of an empire and overturn its laws, but that he has not the soul

to be greatly a villain. No; it is for him to murder by stealth, and then, in the exultation of his heart, to clap his hands and say, "I am within the letter of the law, and I am safe."—Oh! Werter is not the thing I have been describing.

L E T T E R XXXI.

April the 8th,

I HAD but just finished my last letter when Werter entered—he found me in tears, and anxiously enquired the cause. I would have turned from him—the characters I had finished rose full upon my mind. If Werter and Eleonara should realize them, thought I—and I scarcely deigned to look on him—it shall be my part at least to prevent this cruel sacrifice.—I will deprive myself of the present happiness I enjoy, and Werter shall not triumph in his fancied conquest.—I had hardly time to form this resolution, when he threw himself on the chair next me. “What ails you my Ellen,” he said—“and why is this reserve?—you have been in tears—they flow even now, and you make no answer to my enquiries.—” “Tell me, tell me, Ellen,” he added hastily, “what is it has made you so uneasy—is it any thing I have. . . .” “No, indeed,” I replied, assuming an air of coldness—“you are quite yourself, you cannot displease.” “That tone is not your own, Eleonora, from whence have you borrowed it? How unlike that air of tenderness so natural to you.” There was no-

thing particular in this—yet consciousness, Maria, how often does it interpret, and sometimes with what injustice?—“Of tenderness,” I repeated haughtily—it was enough in itself to have convinced Werter—Instantly I felt the force of it, and a blush of the deepest dye covered my face.—“We do not understand each other to-day, Werter,” I added. “We do not, indeed,” said he with a sigh—“It is my fate not to be understood—but your tears distressed me; and could I help wishing to know the cause?”—“I cannot tell you,” cried I, sobbing—“indeed I cannot tell you; but have the goodness to leave me—I am not well, or perhaps I am capricious, and” “I will not go, Ellen,” he replied, “I must stay with you. Let us read—I have brought with me a little French pamphlet, and I want your opinion of it. But it may affect you—shall I keep it till to-morrow?” “No; read it, read it,” said I, “I am just in the humour to listen to a piece of that kind.”—I took my work and he began. The story was pathetic, and described with all that elegant simplicity which the French know so well how to render interesting—

“Claude and Isabelle were tenderly attached to each other—they were poor, and agreed to wait patiently till industry and œconomy allowed them to marry.—Isabelle would fre-

quently paint to herself the happy prospects that the idea of such an union presented——she would describe the charms of frugality when it tended to the comfort of the object of her wishes——she would fancy herself surrounded by her little family, dividing equally amongst them, the labours of the day; and if she herself had the smallest share, it was a privation she did not feel, since what she relinquished was reserved for Claude; who, on his return from work, would enjoy his repast, for he would be ignorant that what he eat was thus spared from his Isabelle's. On the other hand, Claude would work incessantly, and all the money that he got he would carefully put it by towards procuring furniture for his Isabelle's cottage.——He lived upon a turnip, to accumulate sufficient for some few necessaries and a license. This was his morning's thought, and his evening subject——He adored Isabelle, and he was beloved with equal truth. They had fixed upon the cottage they were to dwell in——already Claude had begun to cultivate the garden, and it was Isabelle's pride (when the task she had set herself at her lace, or at her spinning wheel, was finished) to walk thither, and consult with Claude upon the best situation for the fruits or flowers.——Every evening she perceived new beauties——the vines grew, and she tied them up—she pruned the rose trees, and spread the honey suckle

over the hedge——whilst Claud planted the cabbages, and turned the paths that they might be easier for her to walk upon. The cottage was almost furnished, and they wanted but a trifle for the purchase of the license. Claude and Isabelle were in the garden as usual.——“The air is cool, my dear Isabelle,” said he, “besides this walk is damp, you will certainly take cold—let us return.—I will take these grapes to your father, and we will sup together.” “Ah, my dear friend, what a flavour will that give to them—but let me add this bunch, this fine bunch, and it shall be for you, you will not refuse Isabelle?” “No, my charming wife, (Isabelle blushed) you know how to make them acceptable, it is you who gathered them, and you will carry them in your hand.” “Claude, will you ever love me less than you do now?” “No, indeed, my little Isabelle—but why that question?” “Because I have been told, that when folks are married, they forget each other, at least they forget every fond attention, and love dies of itself—and, perhaps, when I am *indeed* your wife, this may happen to you—if so, never let us marry, for I feel I could not support your indifference even now—and how much less when the priest has united us, and we depend on each other only for all our future happiness?” “Who has told you any thing so foolish? No, Isabelle, I have loved you ever since you gave me that nosegay in the

field behind the little wood. How disdainfully you looked when Guillaume asked you for it—and when I begged it, what a timid glance you gave your mother—“Give it him, my child,” she said, “He deserves it.” How modest was your air as you held it out to me. “Here, Claude,” said you, “It is yours.” I put it in my bosom, and I longed to kiss it, but I did not dare, for fear your mother should be angry—but when I got home, I kissed it twenty times—I laid it upon my pillow—I talked to it all night, and in the morning when I rose, I locked it up in my box, all but one flower, which I put in my bosom, and every minute that I rested from my work I pulled it out and kissed it:—at night, I put the bunch upon my pillow again, and the next morning I took another flower, and so I did every day till they were all gone—the rose was the last, and then I was glad to take that leaf by leaf.” “And I, Claude, have got the pencil you gave me—it has no point to be sure, but then I never cut it, because it shall not decrease. But tell me, when I gave you the knot of ribbon for your hat, did you not forget the flowers? and if so” “Ah! that knot of ribbon—but let me lift you over this stile.”—This conversation will give you an idea of the two lovers, how artless, and yet how tender.—At the moment they met several men, who seized on Claude, and in the name of their king con-

veyed him to a vessel which was ready to sail, and which waited only for men. Regardless of the screams and cries of Isabelle, or the violent struggles of Claude, they carried him away, and were out of sight in a moment.—With great difficulty, Isabelle reached home, and related, in the most moving manner, this horrid scene. But he was gone—and she was left in despair. In vain they applied for justice—instead of a king's ship it was a trading vessel, and this was the method they took to get it manned. Its having been a deception, was of no avail to Isabelle—the ship was sailed, and Claude was in it.—Nothing but the hand of Providence could have supported her in this distress—she was almost frantic. At length she received a letter from him—she flew with it to her mother—Claude begged her to beware of Guillaume, for he had reason to believe this cruel separation was of his contrivance—he assured her of *his* fidelity, and of his reliance on *hers*—She was transported with this letter, it was her only companion—she caressed it incessantly, and she detested Guillaume—Not so her parents—Guillaume was rich and present—Claude was absent and poor—they hinted this to Isabelle, who would not listen to it—Claude was all to her—(he was her Werter, Maria) she knew no care but for him—she knew no joy but in his safety, and the chance of his return. Every day passed on in hope, and every evening

brought disappointment.—Claude neither came or wrote—At length a report prevailed in the village that the ship was lost in which Claude was—it reached Isabelle——she ran wild with terror to the owners of the vessel, and they confirmed the melancholy truth. She was in despair——every hour added to her wretchedness——all her days were spent in bewailing Claude——she neglected herself, she declined her food, and she would take no comfort. Guillaume came frequently to the cottage, (for he was her neighbour) he tried to sooth and amuse her, but she would not listen to him——she was undone, and the only satisfaction she seemed to take, was in sitting whole days by the sea-side, and fixing her eyes intently on the waves from whence she never moved them, but to raise them to Heaven, as if to implore its mercy—Misfortunes are never single—amongst those who have only the labour of their hands to depend upon, the cessation of a day's work reduces them almost to want. The tender mother of Isabelle could not see her child's distress without wishing to alleviate it——she therefore gave up her time to her——she would have consoled her, but in vain——her work was neglected, and they trusted in the father of the family for support.

For a time he pursued his labour, but he fell ill, and they had nothing to depend on.—

They borrowed of their friends, hoping they might one day be able to pay, but that time did not arrive—and then they sold what little they were possessed of, which their creditors perceiving, thought to come in for their share, and cruelly sent them to prison.—Isabelle followed for she had no choice in her habitation—the house—the fields, or the prison were alike to her. In this melancholy hour, and they were almost perishing for want of food, Guillaume stepped forth—he offered them every assistance—but Isabelle was to be the reward. The sacrifice of the daughter appeared too terrible to these afflicted parents, and they refused his help, till famine assailed them, and in this agony they cried to their daughter for relief—her own hunger she cared not for, but the cries of her parents she could not resist, and she offered herself to Guillaume. He married her, and restored her father and mother to comfort, for Guillaume was a rich farmer, and had wherewithal to live well.—He spared no expence for Isabelle, for he adored her; but she was careless of every thing he said and did—she answered when he spoke to her, and that was all—she shut herself up, and never but when she went to church could she be persuaded to leave the house. At those times she would always walk round by the water side, and look wistfully at the sea. One morning, in her way by

the quay, she observed that a vessel was just arrived, and the passengers were landing—she stopped to look at them.—A young man came on shore—“ ’Tis Claude,” she cried out—“ My Isabelle,” he exclaimed, and they rushed to each others embrace--The sudden tide of joy was too much for her, she felt it, and would have disengaged herself, and she gently put her hand against his bosom.—He cast his eyes upon her wedding ring—and in the same moment they both expired.”

I know not whether I have done justice to this little affecting story, Maria, I believe I have curtailed it of many graces—that of Werter’s voice you lose entirely, and though that added much to me, yet I think the tale is in itself sufficiently interesting to claim a few minutes attention, especially as it is said to be founded on fact, and the circumstance has given rise to many different publications. Poor unfortunate Isabelle—what a fate was thine—but in death you were united—Farewell, Maria, this is a melancholy subject to meditate upon—I will therefore quit it—Adieu.

L E T T E R XXXII.

April the 9th.

THAT letter of yours, my dear friend, has made such an impression on my heart—I cannot get the better of it, and will you believe that I studied being out this morning when I knew Werter would call. I went to Mrs. Menheil's, and with Conrade, Bertha and herself, I spent two very pleasant hours. Those two young people should never be separated—they are formed for each other, and they will have few equals. As I looked at them to-day, I regretted the destiny which may one day, perhaps, divide them. Ah! if we knew what is comprized in our wish for long life, how few, how very few of us would turn our thoughts that way. I remember once reading of a tablet, which, placed in different situations, informed the possessor of the variety of occurrences which were to happen to him during his life. He had been at infinite pains and expence to bring this to perfection. I do not know, whether he had not found the philosopher's stone, which he had pulverized and reduced (in a crucible) to a liquid, in order to varnish this surprizing tablet. He was impatient for the first view—it foretold him of the birth of

a son.—“ Good,” said he. “ Another peep” —his riches encreased by an unexpected addition. “ This is excellent, my precious tablet ! Let us proceed”——his wife was false, and he was disgraced. “ Ah ! change the position.” A severe fit of illness, during which his trusty servant decamps with his property—stop him ! stop him ! he exclaimed. “ But let me look again.”—His wife dies.—“ This will do !——once more.”—His darling son, the pride of his heart, turns profligate—he dissipates his wealth and ‘ Enough, enough : I will close the account.’ He sums up the good and the bad, and calculating the chances, finds they are against him. To prevent, therefore, the evil that must ensue—he breaks the tablet—and at night, before his wife’s face (who was the fore-runner of all his misfortunes) he hung himself in his own garters. I fancy we should none of us like our tablets. As for me, the only ones I would chuse, would be such as could shew me those I love when I am at a distance from them—How frequently then should I look for my Maria.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

April the 15th.

I N the evening of the day I wrote to you last, Werter came. He told me he had called in the morning but could not find me — that he had walked thro' my favourite paths, but I was not there — “ And tell me, Ellen,” he added, “ where had you concealed yourself?” “ I had chosen the fields,” I said, “ and I am sorry we did not meet.” “ It was unlucky for me,” he replied, “ for I was anxious to see you, I could not be happy till I knew you were well — those tears yesterday, Ellen! they distressed me extremely.” “ You are very polite — I am sorry you should grieve on my account.” “ Polite!” he repeated in a tone of amazement — “ Polite!” — and he walked up and down the room. “ Is that extraordinary, Werter?” “ I really do not know, but I had fancied, that to you I was something more than polite.” “ You are,” said I — “ You are my *friend*, but is friendship and politeness incompatible?” “ Friendship and form are incompatible — In the eye of the world, a quiet exchange of mutual expressions of esteem, with now and then, a “ how

do you"—and those at stated periods, is called friendship.—But is the divine enthusiasm, the generous ardor that true and sincere friendship inspires, to be cramped within these rules?"

"There is a certain decorum to be observed in every line, particularly from a woman."

"I grant it, Ellen, a woman cannot be too circumspect, her defenceless situation requires it. But do you make no difference between the cold rules of politeness, and the genuine warmth of friendship? Or, is politeness only what you feel for me?" "Ah! Werter," I said, "you know it is not—my sincerest, my highest friendship is yours." "I thank you, Ellen, I thank you—but you can—I see—distinguish—" My glove fell from my lap—he picked it up, and pressed it to his lips with rapture—it was a thousand times more expressive than if he had kissed my hand—and as he returned it, I felt my face glow—his attentions, during the time he stayed, were so elegant and so refined.—Maria! when I see him watching with transport every turn of my countenance——when I behold him listening with attention to every sentence I utter—why at these times am I not permitted to lay open to him the secret sentiments of my soul? Why may I not express my gratitude?—my gratitude!—O why at those moments may I not say, "Werter I love you."

L E T T E R XXXIV.

May the 1st.

PONTHIN has been here, and you know not how glad I was to see him: he brought me a letter from my aunt, which he should have delivered long before, he said, but that an illness arising from, he believed, an agitation of mind, had kept him at ——— longer than he intended. “The physicians,” added he, “would not suffer me to leave them, but I have now stolen away upon a very happy occasion:—my brother is to be married in a few days to the lady I talked to you of, and I am to join their hands.” “May they be happy,” I replied—“but has her father then consented.” “He has,” said he, “for a brother of his who is rich, insisted on the marriage being immediately solemnized, and offered to settle a handsome fortune on his niece, if her father would approve the union. He readily complied with this proposal, and you may suppose George is impatient for my arrival.” “This is a fortunate and an unexpected turn; and I rejoice in it, for it will give you almost as much pleasure as it does to them—you love your brother, and can feel his happiness.” “I do, indeed; I feel

it very sensibly, and I wish” “ Our wishes are traitors, Ponthin :—but tell me, how is the Count ?” “ He is still indisposed, but much recovered from his fever—it took strong hold upon him—*that* in his heart, I believe, will never be removed.” “ A violent attack is, you know, the sooner decided, and death or health is the alternative. It is the slow consuming disorder that lasts, and whose effect is sure.”—“ And how it makes us linger, Eleonora—it kills by inches.”—He walked to the window, threw up the sash with violence, then pulled it down again, and coming to me—“ which death,” said he, “ would you prefer.” “ The lingering one,” I answered, “ for then we have time to recollect and prepare ourselves.” “ Yes—but when we are prepared, when we have been long prepared, when the failure of every scheme, the disappointment of every expectation has prepared us, and our fondest hopes are crossed—then to take at once the glorious leap, and fly to raptures inexpressible. O ! Eleonora” “ You make me shudder, Ponthin—what is it you talk about ?—And the preparation you speak of ; is that a fit one ?—In a pilgrimage to the holy land, if you meet a stone in your way that requires you to lift your foot higher than you have hitherto done, before you can pass it, are you to declare you will not cross it, but turn and take refuge in the sanctuary from whence you set out?—

Where then is your resolution?—And at this rate how will your pilgrimage be accomplished?”

“If you do not wish it accomplished, Eleonora? If I am inclined to withdraw before I reach the destined goal?” “Why then do you undertake the journey?—what is your view?”

“It is not voluntary, I am compelled to do it, I find myself in a situation not of my own seeking, and I am told I must pursue the tract of others, that I must follow their footsteps, and like them wait for my release; and I am accused of being criminal if I form a wish to enfranchise myself.—Surely it cannot be a crime!” “This sounds well, Ponthin, but is not the reasoning superficial? You are here, it is true, without your own consent; but tell me, did you ever hear of any individual who lamented this involuntary residence till he was induced to do it by some misfortunes that he had met with, or some disappointment to his hopes?—Mortified vanity, the loss of friends, or the passions disappointed, are the original causes that we wish for death. No child before he attains the age of reason, and the faculties of comparing good and bad, ever thinks of death but as a terror that hangs over him;—a clear proof this, that our mere existence is a blessing which we enjoy, and from which we derive happiness. As soon as we are capable of distinguishing, we are instructed in the religion of our forefathers—we are taught that we are the

work of a superior Being. Every thing tends to enforce this opinion—every day brings us additional proof of the fact. We are then convinced, that it is to this Being we are indebted for the innocent pleasures of childhood, and we are grateful—we wish to know more of him——we study his precepts, and his commandments; a new scene opens before us, we read our duty—we compare—we combine, and from the whole we form to ourselves a system, which conscience requires that we abide by. The enfranchisement you talk of is denied us—it is not for us to enquire why—it is enough that we know it is so, and that it is the apple from the tree of knowledge.—We profess our tenets, and should we fly from them?—This is not following the tract of others, it is our own voluntary distinction. We believe in God:—we know that a strict adherence to his will, is a duty expected from us, and that a compliance with it will attain for us immortal glory. Thus distinguishing, and thus believing, is not a deviation from his commands, a crime? Without a doubt we are left at full liberty to indulge in what we like; but let us not presume to say, that that indulgence is lawful, or that because it pleases us it will escape punishment; misfortunes will certainly induce us to part with life without regret—but a resignation to the Divine will—a consciousness of having acted well the part allotted to us, and an humble trust in the

mercies of our Creator.—Are not these the only proper preparations for a life of immortality?—But, my dear Ponthin, it is not for me to explain the word of God to you——rather should you instruct and fortify me, who am so very much your inferior in this, as in every point of knowledge.”——“ You are my superior, Eleonora, you have confuted my argument, and I have learnt from you, in a few words, the duty I owe myself in a strict adherence to the will of Heaven. Let what will befall me, I will regulate myself by the mildness, the gentleness that plays about you—and when in an impetuous moment, in the hurry of passion, or the sting of disappointment, I am inclined to regret my existence, then will I call to mind this conversation, and the remembrance of it shall be as a balm to my disordered soul.——Farewell, my dear Eleonora, I must leave you whilst I have the power to go.”——I could not persuade him to stay for Werter’s coming. “No,” said he, “I wished only to see you, no other consideration could have delayed me a moment from my family, who are anxiously expecting me.—Adieu, Ellen; may you enjoy every comfort you so well know how to bestow.——If I live we may meet again.”——He left me, and it was with the greatest regret I saw him go.—When Werter came he was all affection—his manner excited my tenderness.—Ah! said I to myself, that I was beloved by you!—

But I am—it is certain that I am—every thing declares it.—But Werter himself will not tell me so—perhaps he thinks he is indifferent to me; if he could but see my heart, he would bestow on me that pity he seems to wish to excite.—But, Maria, Werter does see it—he must know, that his conduct, his manners, are not to be observed with indifference.—Perhaps he sees it, but too clearly, and fancies me a fond believing girl.—Heaven knows that I would sacrifice my life to please Werter—but that he should fancy me fond; and that before his declaration has authorised it—that is what I could not bear.

LETTER XXXV.

May the 3d.

THIS is the second day that Werter has missed coming, and I have felt his absence very severely. I sat down to work, and I rose twenty times to see if he was coming up the avenue. I took up Gesler, and threw it down again discontented——Then I would have walked out, but the fear of missing him prevented me.——The morning passed in this state of uneasiness——In the afternoon I went down the field, and sat upon the stile over which I knew he must pass.—I staid there till it was almost dark, but Werter did not appear.—Perhaps he is ill Maria! or perhaps some other engagement prevented him——to-morrow I hope will satisfy me in this particular.

L E T T E R XXXVI.

May the 11th.

MARIA, I have not yet recovered my surprise—Werter is gone—and gone without having told me of his intention.—You will say, this is but retaliating—but Werter cannot have the same motives that I had, you shall judge.—A week passed by, and I neither saw nor heard of him. “He must be ill,” said I, “and I cannot bear this suspense—I will go to the town where I may enquire, and perhaps learn the cause of this absence.” The first person I met was Becquer—“How is Werter?” said I—“He is well, he replied, “I have just heard from him”—“Heard from him!” I repeated—“where is he then?” “He is gone from hence,” he said, “he has been gone this week.” “And when?” I asked, affecting a tone of indifference—“when do you expect him back again?” It is uncertain,” said Becquer, “he is gone on business, but will not, I imagine, stay long.” We parted, and I returned almost petrified.—What am I to think of this, Maria?—But it must surely be some sudden business, and that of immediate consequence, or he never would have left me thus.

L E T T E R XXXVII.

May the 27th.

I Have been to-day at the cottage, and I found only Bertha and Conrade.—She was at work, and he was reading to her—Mrs. Menheil, they told me, was gone to be present at the trial, and they waited with the utmost impatience her return, which they expected every hour; for she imagined she should not be absent above three days, and she had been gone a week. “It will be a great decision,” said Conrade. “I tremble for its consequences,” added Bertha—“Its consequences cannot be fatal to us, my Bertha,” returned Conrade, “for which ever way it is decided, I never will relinquish you—you are mine by every tie of faith and love, and I will claim you in the face of millions.” “You are right, Conrade,” I said—“The heart that is capacious enough to admit of honour, will always reserve a place for love. And the warrior never appears to more advantage, than when he is defending the cause of the injured, and protecting the rights of domestic happiness. A character that unites love and honor is a credit to his country,

and the boast of his family.”—“ I do not doubt Conrade’s affection,” said Bertha, “ But I dread the Count of Montmorenci.” “ Virtue, should never fear, my Bertha, it is in itself superior to title, power, or interest, and you will find it will at last conquer.” Conrade had scarcely finished this sentence, when Mrs. Menheil arrived.—“ I am come to bring you the decree! my children,” she said—“ We have lost our cause, (Bertha turned pale and Conrade flew to support her) but you will not be dissatisfied—listen to what I am going to say. The court was crowded—every one was in expectation, as upon this decree the happiness of many depended. The Count appeared. His noble and venerable figure attracted universal attention—with what different emotions was I agitated at his entrance—my heart beat with fear, respect, duty, and love for my children. My father advanced, and laid his claim to Conrade,—“ As, after Edward, he was his only heir. He was an orphan—a minor, and *his* grandson! was he not the proper guardian for him?”—“ I repeated the request of his mother, who had given him into our hands—and the desire of my husband, who was his guardian, when the Count neglected and despised him.—The Count was circumspect, and confined to his demand—I was firm, and supported Conrade’s choice. At length I was told, that mine was no evidence at all, since I had no witnesses

of what Louisa or Henry had said, and my voice could not possibly decide in my own cause.——I foresaw what would be the consequence of this—and presently the cause was given against us, and Conrade decreed to the care of the Count of Montmorenci. In tears I left the court, but resolved to throw myself at the feet of the emperor, and sue for redress.——I went home very much agitated, and was preparing to return to you, when about seven o'clock this letter was brought me:

“ I HEAR that Conrade is secreted, and now, that he is mine, you mean to remove him from these dominions. Inconsiderate that you are, what will the world say of you? Do not suppose I glory in my triumph. I knew from the first that the victory would be mine, and I had prepared to act accordingly—compassion and mercy are ever attendant on true nobleness of soul, and I will spare you the disgrace of a mean action. You have a daughter, who I am told is extolled for her beauty, and virtue, and that Conrade loves her.——I will unite them, and by that means I shall expunge the name of Menheil from my family, and restore to my house its original dignity.——This is at least what you will not contradict. Bertha, I shall expect to see you this evening—and now that I have put you in a way of procuring your happi-

ness, without involving you in meanness, you may appear before me without a blush, and you shall be received as the daughter of

FREDERIC OF MONTMORENCI."

There was a haughtiness in this, mingled with tenderness, arising I believe from some kind of fear, lest Conrade should be already out of his reach. He is the only remaining branch of the family, and, from his conduct, very dear to my father. You may suppose this letter gave me the greatest happiness, for I know, that what the Count once promises he will perform. I went to him immediately, and he received me with an affection that he had long disguised. I fell at his feet, and expressed my gratitude for his kindness, and thanked him for his intentions towards my children. "Are you satisfied, Bertha?" he said—"I cannot restore to you the dignity you have lost, but I can, by uniting Conrade and your daughter, prevent them from disgracing me farther—I do not say this to mortify you, but to convince you of the happiness you still enjoy, since the succession of the noble house of Montmorenci will be continued through your descendants. And that Conrade may approach me with pleasure, tell him that I appoint this day

week for the celebration of his nuptials with Bertha"—“ My grandfather has studied nature,” said Conrade, “ as well as art—this is the only way he could have taken to make me obedient to him, and to induce me to forget his former injuries.—But will my charming Bertha consent? It is to her I will owe this happiness.” “ My mother shall judge for me,” returned Bertha, (blushing) “ I will be guided by her.” “ Submission to the will of the Count, my dear children, will not I fancy be displeasing to either of you, and I shall look upon his appointment as the time fixed.”

Conrade was transported with joy, and Bertha's elegant countenance expressed satisfaction; whilst Mrs. Menheil indulged the delightful sensations that the happy termination of this affair had occasioned. They would have made a most expressive picture.—Conrade was kneeling at Bertha's feet—who with a timid air had given him her hand, whilst the mother stood before them, and with a look of the utmost tenderness bent rather forward, with her arms extended, as if to embrace them both in the attitude they were in.—I was charmed with this scene, and congratulated them most sincerely on their happy prospects. When I took my leave they expressed their thanks for my constant attention to them, and gave me a

pressing invitation to visit them at——, to which place they are preparing to set out.—— Happy family! I do not envy their lot——but if mine had been as fortunate, I could have been very grateful for it——Farewell, Maria, I am not well, and must bid you an hasty adieu.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

June the 10th.

A MONTH is past, and yet no news of Werter! If you were to ask me how I spent my time during this month? I am sure I could not tell you—A thousand different passions have taken possession of me,—tormented me by turns—Hope and Fear now rule alternately—what various conjectures have I formed?—How many excuses have I made for his absence? and all perhaps unlike the real one. I have waited with anxiety the arrival of every post, but I have not had any letter.—I weary myself with walking—I look in vain for Werter, and I come home melancholy and dejected. But still I indulge an expectation of his returning soon.

L E T T E R XXXIX.

July the 14th.

I HAVE seen Becquer, he has been here—
 “And what,” you will say, “has he told
 you?” I scarcely know, Maria—I am so asto-
 nished, that I think I have not clearly compre-
 hended what Becquer said to me; for when I
 enquired after Werter, and when he was to
 return?—“Not at all I believe,” said he,
 “he seems to be very well satisfied with the
 situation he is in. He is happy, and does not
 talk of returning.” “He is happy!” I re-
 peated, “I am glad of it!” I could say no
 more, but I felt very much disordered, my head
 grew giddy, and I believe if Becquer had not
 taken his leave, I should have died on the spot
 —but his going roused me, and I recovered
 sufficiently to bid him good day—My illness is,
 however, returned with all its weight—but—
 “Wetter is happy,” and I will not dare to
 complain.

LETTER XL.

October the 15th.

I AM but just getting the better of a long and dangerous illness, nor could I till now acquire fortitude sufficient to answer your elegant and affectionate letter—How kind, how soothing you are, my dear friend, and how much do I stand in need of your consolation—Ah, Maria! you know not all the extent of my sorrows—I have learnt from Becquer, that Werter is attached, most tenderly attached, and to an amiable woman, who has it not in her power to return his affection—she is already engaged. Is Werter then, my beloved Werter to suffer the torments of disappointed love! Who can it be, that can allow this? — she must be already married, or nothing could induce her to hesitate a moment—and yet that cannot be, for Werter's honour would interfere—he never would encourage an affection for a married woman.—I cannot account for this, it is a mystery that baffles all my penetration—help me to define it, Maria—she is already engaged they say—she must then have been engaged before she knew Werter.—Ah!

if that is the case, how much I pity her—what struggles must she endure, and what strength of mind should she be possessed of to persevere in her engagements. She is amiable! then she must love Werter.—And, poor thing, she must disguise her sentiments. If I knew her, how would I plead for Werter—fool that I am, should I induce her to break her faith—and if Werter fails, have I a chance of succeeding?—I will compose myself, for I am still very weak, and my disordered fancy represents a thousand illusions—Farewell, I will try to sleep.

L E T T E R XLI.

December the 22d.

I WAS not wont to let so many weeks pass by without remembering my Maria——remembering her ! she is ever present to my thoughts, but I know not how it is, I find myself incapable of writing, incapable indeed of every thing but weeping, and that calms my agitated mind, and restores me to myself. I would call in Reason to my aid but she flies me——she will not condescend to argue with Love, and I must wait with patience the time she will resume her empire. The colour of my fate I fear is decided, and how deep, how very deep the dye !——Yet I am recovering, Maria——I am trying to get the better of this fatal malady which has taken such deep root in my heart——but every thing looks dreary around me. The difference of the seasons——how much the force of them depends on the presence or the absence of a beloved object——I experience this every hour.——The rigor of winter is become intolerable to me——I am wrapt up in furs and yet I freeze. No elevated idea animates me——my heart and my senses are alike congealed, and a dull insipid sameness is spread around me——

You have seen the tree of the forest that stands nearest the rising sun—it has felt its invigorating rays, and it has early put forth its buds—they open into blossoms, and are succeeded by the broad leaves, which for a while display themselves and wanton in the air. It appears in all its glory—it seems to feel its superiority and tosses its branches on high. But the sun withdraws its rays—a blast comes from the north and smites it to the root—this tree, so flourishing, begins to droop—the leaves change colour, and they fall—the few that are left wither, and dry upon the boughs—they gradually decrease, and at length there is but one remaining: it is moved by every breath, it bends to the storm, and would willingly save itself; but the rain beats hard against it; the wind blows; and it perishes.—Alas! Maria, this tree—but I have done—nothing now interests me—I am become inanimate, and it is only the days that I expect Becquer, in which I can be said to live.

L E T T E R XLII.

February the 6th, 1772.

MY attention has been called forth, and the glow of friendship still survives——what a vivid spark it must be, that this suspension of my faculties has not extinguished. Ponthin has convinced me that it still exists, and that it burns with the same spirit with which it was first illumined.——I have had a letter from him, and such a one as I should have supposed he would have written——so elegant and so harmonious. He expresses with energy the strength of his friendship, and he solicits mine. Yes, Maria, I agree with you, that the exertion of our faculties where they can give pleasure to another, is a duty incumbent on us——we ought not to live for ourselves alone, but should cherish every ray that can make our state appear less irksome. I will answer Ponthin's letter——but not from selfish motives only; I will assure him of the strength of my esteem for him——he shall know (for I may tell him) that he holds a very high place in my heart, and that whilst it has power to distinguish he shall not be forgotten.

Ponthin is one of the few who would take pleasure in relieving the distress of others——surely then every happiness should be communicated to him. He too is susceptible, but he is not happy. It is the fate of delicate minds to suffer in silence, and how seldom are their sufferings rewarded !

L E T T E R XLIII.

April the 7th.

YOU are surpris'd that I do not write to you often, my dear Maria :—rather should you be surpris'd that I can write at all.—You can have no idea of the solitary, the miserable hours I pass — I do not take pleasure in any thing—if I take my pen, I am oblig'd to throw it aside again almost immediately ; I have not spirits to write—I have nothing to say, for I have lost my subject, my darling theme. — Werter, who us'd to inspire every idea, whose look of approbation could put me into good-humour with myself ; he is gone — and a melancholy oppresses me—which I cannot make you understand :— it is of that unobtrusive kind, which would scarcely be discerned— even if you were with me, and yet it has absolute dominion over me ; it continually recalls Werter to my imagination—I recollect every word, every sentence he uttered—I repeat to myself the conversations as they pass'd, and I believe my memory is so faithful, that, on his part, I never omit a single syllable. I reproach myself continually for this, but it is almost the only amusement I have ; it insinuates itself into every

idea, and Werter's image, his sentiment and manner, arise closely twined around my heart, that death only can make them loose their hold. I am sometimes tempted to complain, and should complain to you, Maria; but that I cannot suffer any one, not even myself, to think ill of Werter. His conduct, I am well assured, is more owing to the natural impetuosity of his passions, which will not allow him to be for any length of time satisfied with the same thing, than to a cruel levity, or a pleasure in distressing others. Perhaps it was my fault——perhaps he could not help observing my unfortunate attachment to him; and, to sooth me for a while indulged it——I scarcely dare think of that, Maria;—all I know is, that I would rather acknowledge my own weakness—I would rather, in the face of the world, avow my love for him, than that he should be condemned. But, I believe, I had better let this alone, for however strongly I may plead for Werter, you, my tender and amiable friend, will, I know, decide for Eleonora.

L E T T E R XLIV.

May the 1st.

IT is this day twelvemonths since I last saw Werter.—You know that it is customary to commemorate the annual return of any particular day, on which a striking event of either pleasure or pain has taken place. I too have made my sacrifice, for I have destroyed the letter I received from Werter, when in happier times he solicited my return from ———. What revolutions a few months bring about—how differently he then thought from what he does now! These vicissitudes—what misery they occasion! Ten thousand times more poignant than if we had never experienced happiness. With tears I took this letter (but too dear to me) from my pocket book, and I determined to burn it.—My friend, the first sentence that caught the flame, was that in which Werter reminded me of Julia's having conjured him to protect me.—I cannot describe to you the sensations that this trifling circumstance created. I would have snatched it from the fire, but Werter's forgetfulness of this trust, darted into my mind, and I desisted. I resolved not preserve any monument of

his infi (I dare not finish the word, Maria) and I stood to watch it burn, with the determined resolution of a stoic. But when it was quite lost—when this beloved letter, over which I had shed so many tears was consumed, and I saw the last spark trembling in the ghost of the paper, then it was I felt the force of what I had done. Ah ! I exclaimed, that my affections could but thus perish, with what content would I exchange them for those which are not earthly. This raised my thoughts to Heaven ; —“ If I were there,” I said, “ perhaps I might see Werter’s heart, and perhaps I might discover in it some small spark of affection for Eleonora : if so, I would increase it by the breath of angels, and they should diffuse a peaceful harmony through his impassioned soul :—the assurance of this, would even increase my joys. —Ah ! no Eleonora——thou forgettest that in those regions of delight, every lesser affection will be dissolved ; that thou wilt be raised to so superior a height of glory, and that thy beating heart will be at rest !

L E T T E R XLV.

September the 20th.

YOU were uneasy at receiving a letter from Jenny, and you feared me dangerously ill. I have been so, my dear friend, for the last four months I have been confined to my room, and a violent fever had nearly conquered the skill of the physicians; but I patiently took every medicine they gave me, and they assure me I am now mending. They are certainly deceived Maria, for I am still very ill. This is the first time they have allowed me to write,—and I am even now limited to a very few minutes.—I am almost tired of books, for they are continually reading to me that I may not be allowed to think—to think!—I have but few subjects to meditate upon, and they will intrude in spite of Lessing or Gesler. Prescriptions for the disorders of the mind are rarely successful, and mine is of that nature that cannot be cured. Werter loves another!—that can never be effaced!—Reflection, indeed, may soften the impression, and convince me of the folly of lamenting an inevitable evil—at least so philosophy would teach; but my heart still bleeds, and it will not receive comfort. Your letters,

and those of Ponthin, are my only companions — I read them over twenty times a day. — Yours, my Maria, will (if any thing can) reconcile me to myself — the descriptions you give, in order to amuse me, frequently make me smile; but like the playful breeze, which sometimes agitates the bosom of deep waters, its impression passes away, and a fixed solemnity remains. — Yet am I grateful for your intention. — Ponthin's are instructive, and he conveys his instruction with a happy eloquence that charms. He too has a very melancholy turn, which is so strictly in unison with my feelings, that it corresponds with every motion of my heart — he seems to be in some measure constrained — he does not say all he would say — and the similitude interests me.

My tears flow when I read his letters, but the emotions they cause are mild and peaceful. He writes frequently, ery frequently; for, like Werter, he will not allow that the glow of friendship can be confined by the dictates of fashion. “If my letters persecute you, Eleonora,” he says, “Tell me so, and I will desist; but till then I will follow the impulse of my heart — it feels pleasure whilst I write to you — it is agitated, and happy, whilst I read your answers — and wherefore should I deprive it of this innocent delight. So much for own part, and for your's Ellen; the frequency of my let-

ters do but convince you of the truth, the sincerity of my friendship.—It is not that I wish to recommend to you what I have to say that induces me to write so continually—but that I am too much interested about you to allow months to pass away without any intelligence of your welfare and happiness?—Farewell, my dear Maria!”——I must give him a few lines : I owe them to him, and I would willingly do any thing that will occupy my thoughts. Adieu.

L E T T E R XLVI.

November the 4th.

YOU desire me to walk about myself, to enter minutely into my sorrows, and describe them accurately ;—and you say that it will relieve me.—No ; my Maria—you have too much sensibility to partake my afflictions, they would but make you unhappy, without adding to my repose—besides, I could not, if I would, describe them—they are too complicated. Love and Despair are cruel tyrants ! It is Religion only that can subdue them ; and to her I fly ! I derive consolation from her lessons, and a consolation that I trust will be lasting. But you are no stranger to her precepts, and you have proved the strength of her support.—It is a long time since I heard of Werter ! I know, this is what I ought not to be sorry for ; but nature will prevail, and I think I should suffer with more resignation if I was sure that he is contented.

L E T T E R XLVII.

December the 7th.

BECQUER sat with me two hours yesterday—I watched him from the moment of his arrival—I longed to hear him speak of Werter—but I had the fortitude not to enquire about him; and he did not mention his name. It was cruel in Becquer—he must have seen how impatiently I was expecting it from him. At length I could refrain no longer—“Tell me,” I said, “how is Werter? and where is he?” The tears rushed into his eyes—“He is wretched!”—was all his answer. “Wretched!” I exclaimed, “you have then mentioned me to him.” As if, Maria, that would have occasioned his wretchedness—how foolish!—“I have not indeed,” he replied—“I have been true to my word. But Werter is miserable!—He cannot obtain the object of his wishes:—and he has been mortified, from an unlucky circumstance which lays heavy at his heart; and which he has not yet got the better of.”—“And who has mortified Werter?” I cried out—“who could offer an affront to such a spirit as his?—But it cannot be, Werter would not have received it!—You

say that he is miserable, Becquer? But let us talk on some other subject, this—will—kill me.”——I could scarcely conceal my tears; but complaining of a violent cold, I put my handkerchief to my eyes.——Becquer, who sincerely esteems Werter, was affected by what he had said. He walked into the garden, and staid till he was a little recovered: then returning, he told me all the news of the town. But interrupted himself frequently, to say, that I looked very ill; and that he thought me much altered of late!——the glass has told me that for some time past. You would hardly know me Maria--the colour is fled from my cheeks, and my eyes have lost that expression which you used to call angelic. I am thin——but I feel quieter than I was. I do not wish for any thing at a distance from home.——The part of the garden which Werter once weeded, is the only walk I ever take. Indeed I could not go much farther if I would; for I am very weak, and exercise is what I am not now able to bear.——Good night my sweet friend!——it is late, and yet I do not seem inclined to quit my pen.——Methinks I could say more of Werter——but I will not! Adieu.

L E T T E R XLVIII.

January the 2d. 1773.

THE scene is closed for ever!—And this world now contains nothing that can interest me : every wish, every hope, is at an end ; —even you, my Maria, the companion of my youth, the indulgent friend of my heart, the partaker of all its pains, and all its pleasures—even you, are not in my eyes what you were. But you are not altered, 'tis I am not the thing I was. —I have done with this scene of sorrow, my heart is unbound, it is no longer tied to earth. Werter has unbound it—but how ? —He is dead !—and dead by his own hand !—It is I, Maria, who have traced that sentence. You will doubt it ; and yet it is so.—But I am calm, I am composed, and the mercy of Heaven is upon me.—Rash and inconsiderate young man, how could'st thou rush into the presence of thy great and glorious Creator, unbidden and unlooked for. And is this the effect of thy noble, thy exalted sentiments of religion ? —How could'st thou thus degrade them ?—Oh ! Werter ! that I could dip my pen in æther, and in characters of fire exculpate thee ! For every thing but this I could have succeeded.

——And to raise up reasoning to support thy system! Ah! it shrinks from the piercing eye of Truth, her penetration blasts it, and it withers. Was it for thee to judge? What feat, thinkest thou, could be prepared for the son, who hath been sent to a distant country to fulfil his father's commands, and upon whose perseverance in his duty the happiness of myriads depended —— he departs —— he finds dangers and difficulties on his road —— he never once attempts to obviate and explain them for the advantage of those myriads who are to follow him —— but he meets the Virtues and he thrusts them by, he will not listen to their voice, though they teach him truth and wisdom. The Pleasures present themselves, and he caresses them till he finds their sting deeply fixed in his heart —— they tear his vitals and destroy his soul. This was the effect of his own choice, but he will not bear it, his restless and perturbed spirit disdains all controul! —— “He will return from whence he came!” He flies —— the Virtues call to him as he passes along —— he refuses their assistance, and disdaining all restraint, wilfully he rushes into the presence of his father. —— “My voice has not recalled thee, my son; —— nor can’st thou so soon have fulfilled my words! —— I gave thee talents to distinguish, and I set thee in thy way; but thou hast returned before the appointed time. —— Render an account of thyself. * * * * *

* * * * *

Where then is his seat?—Was it thus our heavenly and adored Redeemer acted? Was this the pattern he set before us? No. He resisted the evil, and embraced the good: even he too was tempted;—but he conquered: and what is his bright reward? When the eternal said——“Be free,” he gave us all to chuse——the right and wrong was pointed out to us——the truth was explained, and the consequences were denounced. The great, the awful decree held firm against self-murder. We know the path which leads to it——the passions go before, and even whilst we pursue, we see our dangers. What then but a devout, an humble resignation to the will of the Supreme, can procure us happiness hereafter? What merits shall we have to boast if we have never exercised the talents given to our care——and which of us that has a servant, who disobeys our commands, and who in every instance contradicts our will——but would drive him from us and replace him with another? What then shall we expect from our omnipotent Father! Even with the measure ye mete, so shall it be meted to you withal. Many are the afflictions, and sharp are the pangs I have endured; but have they not arisen from the strength of my passions? These you will say were natural to me.—

They were——but what do I not owe to the bounteous Giver of all Good—who has listened to the voice of my prayer, and in some measure enabled me to subdue them.——O religion! thou pure and sacred source; from which all my comforts have been drawn; deign to support me still——through all the scenes that yet remain attend me——inspire my heart with the spirit of thy holiness, and teach me resignation to the will of Heaven. But what a blow is this!——it has filled up the measure of my sufferings—yet I am resigned—yes, Maria, I will wait with quiet expectation the fiat of the Eternal God! In every prayer will I remember the soul of Werter, and if tears and supplications can expiate, his crime shall be done away.——O Werter! how have I waited for the moment which was to unite me to thee; when nothing earthly could interfere, and now But it will be yet so—Yes, the great and merciful Father will receive my petitions; and daily shall they be offered at the Throne of Grace.——Oh! may the intercessions of Eleonora plead for the decay, the loss of Reason, in Werter.

T H E E N D.

W E R T E R

T O

C H A R L O T T E.

A P O E M.

IMPROBAMOR, QUID NON MORTALIA PECTORA COCIS.

VIRG.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE subject of the following poem is taken from the *SORROWS OF WERTER*, a German performance, universally read and admired. The author has endeavoured to express, in verse, some of the incidents and sentiments with which he was chiefly struck, in the perusal of that affecting story. The following epistle is supposed to have been written by Werter, at that period when he was under the most violent agitations of disappointed love, and frantic despair. How far the author has been successful in representing the emotions of soul natural in such a state of mind, he has no right to determine: he commits his cause to the impartial decision of the public. He might plead that his youth gives him some claim to indulgence, but, if he were to rest upon this apology alone, he is sensible that he might justly be charged with presumption, for exposing a performance, prematurely, to the critical eye of experience. He is old enough to have observed, that intrinsic merit only can procure lasting approbation to the composition, either of young or old. If the poem, now offered to the pub-

lic, be deserving of approbation, he is confident that it will be honoured with it, and he will thankfully receive it; if not, he submits to the impartial award, though his verses should be as short lived as the unhappy love which they mean to celebrate.

WERTER TO CHARLOTTE.

A P O E M.

LOST to the world, to all its pleasures lost,
And torn from thee, whom I admir'd the most,
'Ere yet my soul prepares to wing its flight
To the pure regions of eternal light;
Let me, a while, the destin'd blow restrain,
To weep my passion, and unfold the pain;
The fatal progress of my love t' impart,
And ope the secret sluices of my heart;
Pour out my soul in deluges of grief,
While woeful mem'ry brings a sad relief;
Then let the loosen'd soul triumphant soar
To those bright realms, where anguish pains no
more.

To thee, dear Charlotte! be these lines address'd,
Thou fair, thou fatal conqu'ror of my breast:

Let this sad letter faithfully impart
 The woeful records of a wounded heart ;
 With pity's eye, thou charming fair one ! see
 How much I lov'd ! how much I bore for thee !
 Trace ev'ry pang ! and tremble, while you read
 What dire effects from hapless love proceed ;
 His ev'ry pang to thee does Werter owe !
 To thee, sweet, guiltless cause of all his woe !
 At ev'ry line the gushing tear shall start,
 And thrilling pains shall vibrate through thy heart ;
 Stain'd by thy tears, the words shall faintly shew,
 Till sense is lost amid a cloud of woe ;
 Yet 'ere this letter shall by thee be read,
 The hapless writer sleeps among the dead.

Yet let my soul indulge its pleasing pain,
 And call to mind each past ! each blissful scene !
 The fond delirium of my love pursue,
 And tell how much I lov'd, and felt for you !
 Ye smiling days ! when nature bloom'd around,
 And summer's liv'ry cloath'd the verdant ground,
 Then first my Charlotte blaz'd upon my sight,
 While my rapt soul o'erflow'd with fond delight ;
 Lost in amaze, I gaz'd upon thy charms,
 Then first this heart experienc'd soft alarms ;
 What melting accents did those lips impart,
 And ev'ry word shot thrilling through my heart,
 Thy charms, bright fair ! mild, innocent, and gay,
 Beam'd forth all beauteous, and adorn'd the day :
 I caught thy glances with a sweet surprise,
 And fir'd my soul with lustre from thine eyes.
 Image of piety ! when I descry'd
 The lovely children sporting by thy side,

Each tender babe beheld in thee combin'd
 The sister, mother, and th' instructor kind.
 In love's fierce raptures all my soul was tost,
 In sweet confusion ev'ry sense was lost;
 My heart heav'd joyful at the soft command,
 For, oh! what heart such charms could e'er with-
 stand.

Ah ever dear! yet ever fatal hour!
 When first I yielded to superior pow'r,
 When, swiftly owning Love's all mighty sway,
 This heart with ardour kindled to obey.
 Why gaz'd I, Charlotte, on those heav'nly charms?
 Thou, thou wert destin'd for another's arms;
 Unhappy Werter must all hopes resign!
 Dread thought! my Charlotte never could be mine!
 Too late I felt the God's all-pow'rful dart,
 Too late I strove to tear thee from my heart;
 Delusive hope! Love check'd the rash desire,
 And still thy charms heap'd fuel on the fire.
 Then was I left to all the stings of care,
 To feed a passion founded on despair,
 To view thy beauty, and with sighs adore,
 With awe to view thee! but, alas! no more,
 At distance to behold the lovely prize,
 And drink fresh poison daily from thine eyes;
 What then I suffer'd, and how well I lov'd,
 By tears, all eloquent, could best be prov'd.

But lo! the fatal, nuptial knot is ty'd,
 The joyful Albert leads his blooming bride:
 For ever Charlotte from these arms is torn,
 And to the bridal bed in triumph borne.

Oh heav'ns! while Werter bleeds in dire dismay,
 And night renews the torments of the day,
 The happy Albert folds thee in his arms,
 Glues to thy lips, and riots on thy charms;
 He checks thy terrors with an ardent kiss,
 Those virgin terrors that augment the bliss;
 Then, then as closely in his arms thou'rt prest;
 Does no one secret sigh escape thy breast,
 Nor one sad tear for hapless Werter flow!
 For him, who bears for thee a world of woe?
 And no! false fair! thou yield'st him all thy charms;
 And Werter is forgot in Albert's arms.

What have I said? What phrenzy racks my soul!
 My passion rages! suff'ring no controul:
 Forgive! forgive, O lovely, guiltless fair!
 The furious impulse of forlorn despair;
 The sad remembrance of each former scene
 Storms through my heart with agony of pain.
 'Twas I, dear Charlotte, was alone to blame,
 To soothe, to nourish this destructive flame;
 This fatal passion, that all bounds surpass,
 That still burn'd fiercer, by despair encreas'd;
 'Twas guilty Werter who disturb'd thy peace,
 And Death, death only can the wrong redress.

Yet wert thou form'd to fill these eager arms,
 And I, my angel! might have gain'd those charms:
 Oft have I mark'd thee heave a gentle sigh,
 And trac'd the tear that trickled from thine eye.
 Love by degrees prepar'd his pointed dart,
 And gain'd a soft admission to thy heart:

But ah, too late ; each flutt'ring hope was o'er,
 Thou gav'st me pity, but thou could'st no more ;
 Yet 'twas a bliss, that language cannot name,
 To find my Charlotte felt the gentle flame.

Yes ; we were form'd each others arms to bless,
 So pure a passion merited success ;
 Each heart was form'd to feel a mutual flame,
 The same our pleasures, and our taste the same.
 Oh blissful state ! when too fond bosoms burn,
 And wish for wish, and love for love return :
 Not such the raptures Albert feels for thee ;
 But thou, my Charlotte, hadst been blest with me !
 Alas ! he views thee with no Werter's eyes,
 Ah, too unconscious of so fair a prize ;
 But oh, what transport had our union crown'd,
 And Love, and sweet content had ever bloom'd
 around.

Yet still, my Charlotte ! still shalt thou be mine,
 So sweet an object I shall ne'er resign,
 From me, tho' sever'd by religious ties,
 Heav'n shall bestow what cruel earth denies.
 In those bright regions free from mortal care,
 Where all is glory, and where all is fair ;
 Where ev'ry form a smiling aspect wears,
 No husband threatens, and no anguish tears ;
 Where truth, and justice find a pure regard,
 And white rob'd virtue gains a sure reward ;
 There at th' Almighty's throne shall I remain,
 He'll soothe my sorrow, and allay my pain ;
 And when arriving, thou shalt bless my fight,
 I'll spring to meet thee with a pure delight.

Then at the foot of that imperial throne,
 To him my suff'rings I shall then make known ;
 There, there disclose that pure, that heav'nly flame,
 And Love's bright passion shall enforce my claim :
 Heav'n then shall smile consenting to our love,
 And heap fresh blessings in the realms above.

At night, when slumber seals each mortal eye,
 My lovely Charlotte in my dreams I spy :
 Along the valley we together stray,
 And in delightful converse cheat the day ;
 I press thy tender hand, I drop a tear,
 But thy kind glances bid me not despair ;
 I wake—the sweet illusions mock my eyes,
 I stretch my arms—the lovely phantom flies :
 Bereft of comfort, floods of anguish flow,
 I sigh and sorrow o'er my future woe :

Still thro' my bosom fierce sensations rove,
 All ! all the symptoms of ill-fated love :
 Fierce love still rages with unbounded sway,
 Ah ! what can calm it, and the storm allay.
 Now rays of flutt'ring hope my breast inspire,
 And my heart melts in tides of soft desire.
 Should Albert die ! then Werter might be blest !
 Might clasp his Charlotte to his faithful breast !
 False thought begone ! ye fond delusions cease,
 For ne'er can Charlotte crown my warm embrace.
 Then in a thousand pangs my soul is tost,
 False hopes delude me, and I still am lost.
 Alas ! this fatal phrenzy drives me on,
 T' encounter rocks, which prudence bids me shun ;
 I start with horror, shudd'ring thro' despair,
 And each gay vision vanishes in air.

Recal, my love ! recal that fatal hour,
 When virtue sunk beneath superior pow'r :
 When love's fierce passion eager led me on,
 T' attempt a danger, which I strove to shun.
 Then round thy waist my eager arms I prest,
 And glowing, clasp'd thee to my panting breast ;
 When thy soft lips did balmy warmth inspire,
 And kindled thro' my soul a thrilling fire :
 Each touch was magic, and each look was love,
 And melting kisses did the joy improve.
 Lost was each sense in passion's sweet excess,
 And virtue stagger'd at th' approach of bliss.
 Then as I clasp'd thee in my folding arms,
 Suck'd transport from thy breath, and panted on
 thy charms ;

Thy voice at once restrain'd the fierce desire,
 And in its progress check'd the rapid fire.
 No more the tides of joy began to roll,
 Bright virtue rose triumphant o'er my soul.
 That flame divine th' imperious passion sway'd,
 The voice of Charlotte I like Heav'n's obey'd.

Yet oh ! forgive ! forgive th' impetuous flame !
 The gush of passion then no pow'r cou'd tame,
 The soft transfusion of that balmy bliss,
 Still riots thro' my soul in deep excess.
 What kindling transports did those charms inspire,
 Those looks of sweetness ! and those eyes of fire !
 Swift thro' my heart the fatal poison flow'd,
 Unbrac'd each nerve, and ev'ry sense subdu'd.
 These arms have folded all my soul held dear,
 And one sweet hour has balanc'd months of care ;

Still on these lips I feel the warmth divine,
That melting warmth, which they imbib'd from
thine !

Nor years th' impression e'er can waste away,
It rivets deeper, and augments its sway.

But now, my love ! these once lov'd scenes have
ceas'd,

And Death's fierce image sways my tortur'd breast :
'Tis fix'd, my Charlotte ! Death must cure my woe !
My soul with transport waits th' expected blow :
'Tis not vain passion bears me to my fate,
My heart rests quiet, and my soul's sedate ;
Nor through the impulse of forlorn despair
Does Werter seek this remedy for care ;
But since my woes their destin'd course have run,
'Tis Death must finish what my Love begun ,
Too long fierce tortures rent this hapless heart,
And Death alone can mitigate the smart.
He comes more joyful, and in smiles array'd,
Since 'tis for thee the sacrifice is made :
Oh ! at the thought, vain, empty terrors fly ;
He looks more charming as he comes more nigh !
Soon as thy hands this letter shall unfold,
A dreary grave the sad remains shall hold
Of one, who pour'd for thee his latest breath,
And sought repose within the arms of Death.
Thy words no more shall heav'nly joys impart,
Or with new virtues fire this glowing heart ;
That heart, where love once held a pow'ful sway,
No more shall kindle, and no more obey.

When last from thy dear presence forc'd to part,
Heav'ns! what fierce tumults storm'd throughout
my heart;

O'er my whole frame a shiv'ring horror prey'd,
All hopes forsook me, and all comfort fled:
By tears, at length, I gain'd a sad relief,
And my soul floated in a sea of grief,
A thousand schemes rush'd through my tortur'd
breast.

Each sense disorder'd, and each hope suppress'd;
At length triumphant did one thought remain,
'Tis Death, death only can relieve my pain.

The wish'd-for hour, my love! approaches nigh,
When Werter, with his woes, in peace shall lie;
But yet it softens all I feel for thee,
To think my Charlotte may reflect on me;
These hopes for once my heart-felt pangs restrain,
But 'tis a pleasure that is mix'd with pain.
Full well I know what pains thy heart shall feel!
What sighs shall issue! and what tears shall steal!
To think that bosom shall with pangs be rent,
Awhile with-holds me from the fix'd intent.
When you, my love! while ev'ning blushes fair,
Walk forth t' enjoy the fragrant cooling air;
When oft through those delightful shades you rove,
(Those shades once conscious of my hapless love)
Oh! think how Werter, with a lover's pace,
Sprung from the valley to thy dear embrace;
Then shall you view, with sorrow-streaming eyes,
Where, wrapt in sleep, what once was Werter, lies,
And when the sun his rapid course has past,
And faintly glimmers from the distant west,

My fair shall view, while pangs her heart assail,
 The grass high o'er me trembling to the gale;
 Then sad, and slowly homeward you'll return,
 Vent your soft sorrows, and in secret mourn;
 In all the symptoms of forlorn despair
 You'll look around—but see no Werter there.
 He who has oft a just attention shew'd;
 Imbibing virtues as from thee they flow'd;
 The recollection of each past delight
 Shall rack thy soul with anguish, and affright;
 A thousand pangs thy bosom must endure,
 And thou must bear 'em, hopeless of a cure;

Yet soon shall Death uplift his pointed dart,
 And freeze the pulses of this beating heart:
 My soul determin'd, and my thoughts resign'd,
 The heart at length shall triumph o'er the mind;
 Nor didst thou think, when last I bade adieu,
 That these fond eyes no more should Charlotte
 view.

Alas! no more! what now these lines impart,
 Shall rouse soft sorrows from thy swelling heart:
 These eager arms, that once encircled thine,
 Must soon the glowing warmth of youth resign;
 These eyes, that spoke the racking pains I bore,
 Must soon their once rebellious fire give o'er,
 No more shall they behold the sun's fair light,
 Dark clouds surround it, and conceal from sight:
 Let Nature now relent in pearly dew,
 And join her kindly tears, my love! with you.
 Your Lover now the goal of fate draws near,
 Nor does he tremble! nor recede with fear:

This the last day ! yet wherefore then the last ;
 It hastes that succour to my suff'rings past.
 Now vital warmth inspires this mortal frame,
 But soon death's hand shall freeze that heav'nly
 flame ;

These spirits circle for thy sake alone,
 For thee, a cause much dearer than their own.
 What is that death which doth such terrors frame !
 'Tis but mere slumber, and a gentle dream !
 Tho' Death from torments shall this bosom free,
 Death ne'er can separate my heart from thee.

Glad to the stroke my bosom I present,
 My Love affords the fatal instrument.
 The means of death since I receive from you,
 Heav'n must the blow with approbation view :
 You gave the pistol with a fearful mind,
 And did you deem it for such use design'd !
 But ah, my Love ! you gave not one farewell !
 Nor one sad tear for hapless Werter fell.
 Oh ! could thy heart the tender flame resign,
 In that sweet hour which ever makes me thine :
 The soft impressions ne'er shall quit this heart,
 Nor thy dear image ever thence depart.
 Yet love still whispers ; yes ! with joy I see
 Thou can'st not hate the man who doats on thee.

And thou, O Albert ! this adieu receive !
 With pity hear me, and my wrongs forgive !
 'Twas hapless Werter who disturb'd thy rest,
 And ruffled with fierce pangs thy peaceful breast :
 He sow'd the bitter seeds of jealous strife,
 'Twixt thee, O Albert ! and thy lovely wife :

For this a just atonement shall be made,
 And death already spreads his mournful shade.
 Yet Albert, hear! my dying accents hear!
 Comfort that angel, and relieve her care:
 Sooth those soft sorrows that for me shall flow;
 And let thy mildness mitigate her woe!
 And when she drops the tender tear for me,
 (Past friendship shall exact a tear from thee :)
 Join in the sympathy, her thoughts compose!
 Sigh back her sighs, and mingle in her woes.
 These wish'd-for hopes shall fortify my heart,
 Compose Death's terror, and allay the smart:
 So shalt thou hope the joys of Heav'n to prove,
 And shine exalted with the blest above;

And now the dreary, fatal hour draws nigh,
 And Love exclaims aloud, "'Tis time to die."
 And round deep silence holds her awful reign,
 And my soul brightens at th' approaching scene!
 Thro' the brown gloom I cast my eyes around;
 And lo! what dark'ning shades the Heav'ns sur-
 round!

Concealing Nature in one thick'ning veil,
 And suit the spirit of my soul full well.
 Shall I once favour from thy mercy find?
 Wilt thou, my love! to my remains prove kind?
 Where the two lime-trees rear their awful head,
 There, there let Werter with his woes be laid!
 Thou with thy father all persuasions use;
 So small a favour he can ne'er refuse!
 But pious souls perhaps may disagree;
 Nor wish to rest near such a wretch as me!
 Then in some valley let my relics lye;
 Remote, and distant from each human eye!

Or let me slumber on the common way,
 While my sad fate the marble shall display ;
 That when some wand'ring trav'ler shall behold
 The tomb, which Werter's relics does enfold,
 My hapless fate may rouse the swelling sigh,
 And tears may trickle from a stranger's eye.

'Tis past ! my Charlotte ! Death triumphant reigns,
 And o'er this bosom shakes his icy chains ;
 But could my death give quiet to thy heart,
 With what swift transport I'd perform my part !
 Oh ! on such terms how sweet the sacrifice !
 But cruel fate so soft a boon denies.

Now my rack'd soul swift hovers o'er the grave,
 And now this last adieu, my love ! receive.
 Adieu ! thou lovely cause of Werter's pain !
 Yet soft ! O soft, my soul ! thy pangs restrain !
 How well I lov'd thee, 'tis my death can tell.
 Farewell, my Charlotte ! Love, and Life farewell !

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